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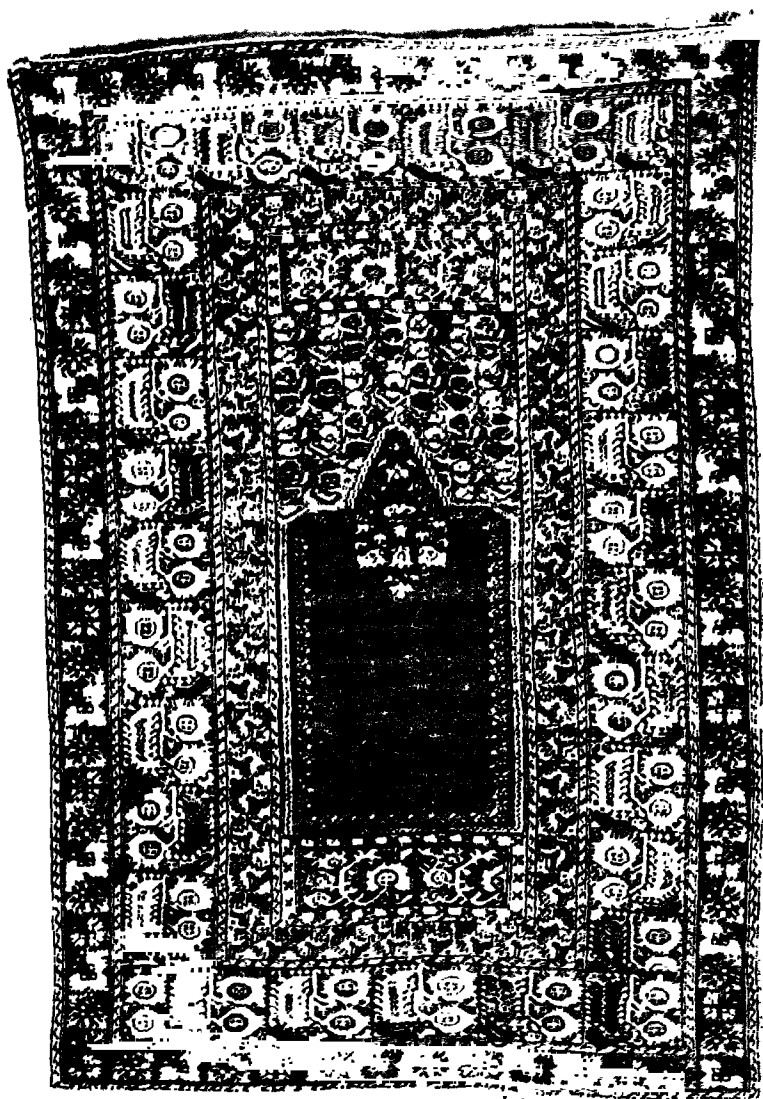
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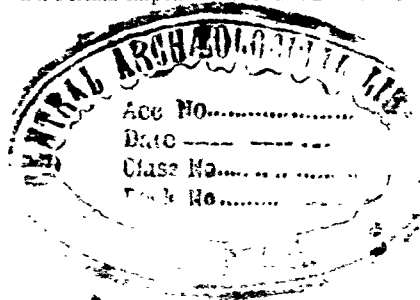
ANTIQUE GHIORDES

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# HOW TO KNOW ORIENTAL RUGS

A HANDBOOK  
BY MARY BEACH LANGTON  
WITH TWENTY FULL-PAGE ILLUS-  
TRATIONS, TWELVE BEING FAC-  
SIMILE REPRODUCTIONS IN COLORS

"Were a man to live as long as Methuselah  
he would never cease to find fresh beauties  
in a Persian carpet."—M. CHARLES BLANC



LONDON  
SIDNEY APPLETON

F. WARNE & CO.  
15 BEDFORD STREET, STRAND  
1904

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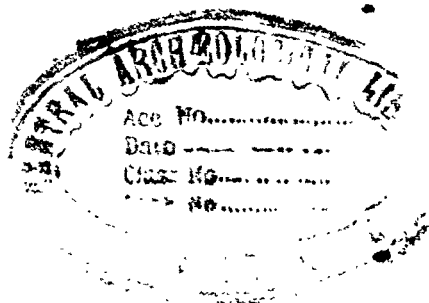
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DEDICATED TO  
MY HUSBAND  
WHO HAS MADE POSSIBLE  
THIS BOOK



~~A. M. S. S. S.~~

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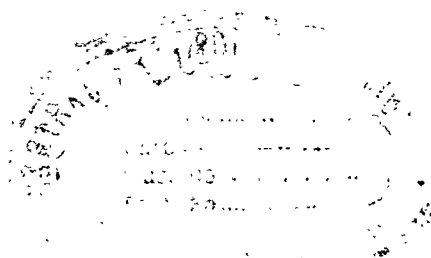
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## INTRODUCTION

THE demand for Oriental rugs increases rapidly. A few years ago they were little known outside the principal cities and a limited number of collections elsewhere; but to-day there is scarcely a town in the world where they are not used and more or less intelligently discussed. They may now be said to have become a permanent factor in house-furnishing everywhere. We have turned to the products of the East because they possess greater artistic merit than the work produced in America or Europe.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

There are four qualities in Oriental rugs which commend them. First, is durability. The life of the average domestic carpet may be reckoned by a few years, while that of the Oriental product can be measured by decades or generations. Second, should be named their artistic beauty of design and coloring. The Oriental workman knows how to combine colors. In a general way other makers are only imitators, who reproduce designs found in the East. In the third place, we secure through them economy in furnishing. While the outlay at first is undoubtedly large, yet, in view of the wearing qualities of rugs, owners possess something which has real, permanent value. Fourth, may be named the sanitary conditions which attend their use. House-cleaning with

## *Introduction*

rugs on the floor ceases to be altogether a terror. Indeed, housekeeping in general through them is simplified and placed under better hygienic conditions.

The literature pertaining to rugs has not kept pace with the use of them. In 1892 the Royal Austrian Museum published a book entitled "Oriental Carpets," which is a large work, with reproductions from magnificent color plates of some of the finest rugs in the world as collected for the Austrian Imperial Exhibit, and also with monographs written by Sir George Birdwood, Mr. C. Purdou Clarke, Mr. Vincent J. Robinson, and others. The edition, however, was limited, the expense of the work making possession of copies possible only to a few persons and the largest libraries. This

### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

pioneer work, as to its text, at once became an authority on the subject, while its illustrations enabled readers to gain knowledge of some of the rarest specimens of the art. In 1900 Mr. Mumford's valuable but somewhat expensive work, "Oriental Rugs," appeared, and greatly stimulated interest in the subject.

In view of the almost universal demand that now exists for information on the subject, the present more modest work will perhaps be accepted as timely and may serve to meet an existing popular need. The author has made a close and careful study of the subject, and has had valuable suggestions from experts and dealers, as well as access to the collections of several well-known houses. Her aim has been an entirely practical one—to

## *Introduction*

tell readers How to Know Oriental Rugs.

The plan and arrangement of the book will, I think, commend themselves to readers. The opening chapter, for example, The Story of the Rug, contains a brief survey of the entire field, giving an outline of weaving, materials, dyes, and designs, as well as of the symbolism, history, and artistic qualities of rugs. In the succeeding chapters various classes of rugs are described. Each is placed in its proper geographical environment as to the country where it is produced, and the manners and customs of the makers are set forth. The peculiarities of patterns, colors, materials, and workmanship are there in detail explained. The map of the various rug districts should be of peculiar



*How to Know Oriental Rugs*

interest and real service. The illustrations are reproductions, in colors or black and white, of photographs of rugs, which have been selected not so much as unique specimens, which they are not, as because they are representatives as types. Let me bespeak for the book a kind reception.

JOSEPH F. LANGTON.

# I

## THE STORY OF THE RUG



# I

## THE STORY OF THE RUG

THE handicraft which has given us History  
Oriental rugs is very ancient. Its ori-  
gin is unchronicled, but as Egypt has  
been the mother of so many arts, we  
may well believe that this one had its  
origin there; for on the sculptures of Egypt  
Beni Hassan, dating back twenty-six  
hundred years before Christ, are de-  
signs of carpets not unlike those in use  
in rug-making, while Diodorus tells us  
that the Egyptians spread carpets for  
their sacred bulls to lie upon. Ebers,  
in Uarda, represents the floors of the  
apartments of Katuti, which were fur-  
nished with royal magnificence, as cov-  
ered with carpets in which "the foot  
sank in the thick pile"; and we know

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

that Cleopatra reclined on couches spread with rich carpets as her barge sailed to meet Antony.

**Babylonia**      Babylonia rivaled all ancient countries in her rich textile fabrics, among them carpets made of wool with a pile like the Persian rugs of to-day. Professor Sayce, writing of the Babylonians, says of their carpets: "They were woven in bright varicolored patterns; the figures of men and animals were depicted upon them, and the bas-relief or fresco could be replaced upon the wall by a picture in tapestry."

**Persia**          When Cyrus extended the boundaries of Persia west of the Zagros Mountains that country fell heir to all the arts of the Euphrates Valley, and from that day to the present has maintained a foremost place in the products of the loom, giving to the world the most beautiful carpets ever made. She has been the teacher of Greek, Arab,

## *The Story of the Rug*

Turk, Turkoman, Afghan, and Hindu, none of whom has ever surpassed her.

The Greeks of Asia Minor, as early as Homer's time, practised the art of rug-weaving, for in the *Odyssey* we read:

Greeks

Fair thrones within, from space to space were raised  
Where various carpets with embroidery blazed,  
The work of matrons.

The Arab was a ready pupil in the textile art, and through him the Moors carried a new industry into Spain, where, in Cordova and Granada, these Saracenic weavers, in a style peculiar to themselves, made most splendid carpets to adorn their palaces and mosques.

Arabs

The crusaders took back to Europe a knowledge of and a desire for the luxuries of the Orient; and soon, through the Italian cities, Persian carpets found their way to all parts of Europe; and later, in the thirteenth

Taken to  
Europe and  
England

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

century, through the Spanish ambassadors who preceded Eleanor of Castile, they were taken to England, where, in the royal palaces and cathedrals, they were used as wall decorations and as floor coverings. From that time on Europe has grown in her appreciation of this art, and has come to recognize and highly prize its products. In England Oriental rugs have been popular since the middle of the nineteenth century, when many were made acquainted with Eastern fabrics through the great Exhibition in London in 1851.

America      Some of the most beautiful antique rugs are in American homes and collections, for the American is rapidly becoming a connoisseur in this art, and all classes are yearly showing a greater interest in it. Few are the homes of taste and refinement where one or more rugs are not found.

## *The Story of the Rug*

While the Western world uses rugs chiefly as floor coverings, to the Oriental they were the only furniture of his house, serving as carpets along the sides and end of the reception-room—the center usually being left for the servants who waited upon or entertained the guests; taking the place of divan, pillow, and cushion covers; doing duty as portières or wall hangings; placed before the open fire as seats of honor, or at the door as a token of welcome; serving as beds at night, which might be rolled away in the daytime. They gave warmth and cheer and a sense of comfort, as they do with us. The rug has always been used for religious purposes: in the service of the old Egyptian temples, in the decoration of the walls of the Kaaba before the time of Mohammed, as altar-cloths and as canopies in processions in Christian cathedrals. In the

Uses

Religious  
Purpose



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

mosques of the Moslems and in the temples of the Buddhists rugs have had a place.

Prayer-rug      The prayer-rug, which has been called a "creed in color," originated with the Mohammedans; and wherever the faithful follower of the Prophet may be, at the hour appointed he spreads his rug, with the *mihrab*, or niche, toward Mecca, and prostrates himself for his devotions, with his head resting on the rug at the point and his hands outstretched. Prayer-rugs are made small for children as well as for grown people; and occasionally one is found with three or more niches, as if intended for a whole family.

Saddle-bags      As in the East the horse and camel are almost the only means of travel, saddle-covers and saddle-bags are universally used. The love of the valuable steed makes it a matter of pride

## *The Story of the Rug*

to the owner to caparison it richly; and there is an opportunity here, as well as in the furnishing of royal palaces and in the *durbars* of India, for the display in gorgeous trappings so dear to the heart of the Oriental.

In this day, when we hear so much of handicrafts and the union of the artizan and artist, it is interesting to note that the thought is almost as old as the human race. The early Hebrews acknowledged the Divine Spirit in the gift of handicraft. "Them hath he filled with wisdom of heart, to work all manner of work, of the engraver, and of the cunning workman, and of the embroiderer, in blue, and in purple, in scarlet, and in fine linen, and of the weaver, even of them that do any work, and of those that devise cunning work" (Ex. xxxv, 35). All Oriental art has this stamp of human labor upon it, and shows not only the skill of the

Oriental  
Handicrafts

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

hand, but the thought of the brain. In Oriental textiles we are impressed with the art spirit of the cunning workman. The East seems permeated with this artistic life, which has been kept alive through all the ages.

Artistic  
Merit of  
Rugs

While the makers of Oriental rugs are people of very primitive habits, who have been to no schools of art, but have simply followed their native instincts, their fabrics possess unrivaled artistic qualities, which add beauty and elegance to our homes. These people seem to have an intuitive perception of the beautiful, which, followed out in this handicraft, has made their work the admiration of every one. We stand lost in wonder before many a finished product of the loom, and would read, if we could, the thoughts written thereon. For as each rug is the expression of an individual, are we not justified in thinking that joy, sor-

The Rug an  
Expression  
of an  
Individual

## *The Story of the Rug*

row, love, deep religious feeling, and sentiment of home may have found expression in this work of the hand? Surely, the rug made for the hour of prayer, when every loyal Moslem turns toward his holy city, must embody many a prayer in its very texture; or the one intended for an offering at some shrine or for the adornment of some mosque must express something of the devotion the maker felt for his holy places; the fabric designed by the young girl as a gift to her future husband must have had the colors and patterns selected with the constant thought of the lover in mind, as the one for the covering of the grave of a friend must be indicative of tender memories; the hearth-rug which is brought before the open fire for the guest of the household possesses, in its very texture, the color and warmth of hospitality so prevalent among these

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

people. May not one which holds in its threads the wish,

May every act of thine prosper  
And every year and every day be to thee spring-time,

have been meant for some beloved monarch? Into those intended for the home as floor coverings, wall ornaments, couch covers, portières, or pillows, may we not think the wife or mother has woven an expression of her love and devotion to each member of the household? We are led to believe this, for the work of rug-weaving and designing is a domestic art, and has fallen almost exclusively to women.

Women  
the Weavers

In parts of India and in Kirman, where the Government has always directed the industry, men and boys are the weavers; and in recent times the great demand for Oriental rugs has forced them to this work in Turkey and in western Persia; but among the

## *The Story of the Rug*

nomad tribes and in districts where no foreign influence is felt the women are still the only makers of rugs. The commercial spirit which has permeated many districts, as, for example, in India, has taken away individual interest in the work and the finer touch which so enhances the value of antique rugs. When individual expression gives place to the commercial instinct, the charm possessed by the rare old pieces will be lost to the art.

Notwithstanding the poetic side of rug-weaving, there is little enviable Little En-  
able in Life in the life of the Oriental woman; for while she seems content to toil at her loom for the support of the household, as well as to do the necessary work, she is really a slave to the master of the house, and her life is one of joyless labor. This woman "seeketh wool and flax and worketh willingly with her hands. She riseth while it is yet night,

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

and giveth meat to her household. She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff." They learn the art of weaving as little children—in fact, we may say there is no childhood for the women of the rug-weaving districts, for they begin at the age of six or seven years to learn the secrets of the loom, first by winding the balls of bright-colored yarns which are hung across the top of the loom within easy reach of the weaver, then by tying in the plain colors, learning little by little, until with ease and dexterity and a deftness of hand which we know little about they become proficient in the art.

Process of  
Weaving

Practically the same method of weaving is employed as that of two thousand or more years ago. Vincent J. Robinson, in his *Eastern Carpets*, thus describes the process: "A very rough loom is contrived by placing

## *The Story of the Rug*

two horizontal poles or large beams, according to the width of the proposed carpet, the one about a foot or eighteen inches above the level of the floor, and the other six or seven feet above that and parallel with it. Upon the upper of these beams are coiled the threads, or warps, which are to form the foundation of the carpet, with their lower ends strained or fixed to the bottom pole. The loom being 'set up,' the pile is gradually worked into the warp-threads in the following manner: Small bobbins of wool, goats' hair, or other material of which the pile is to be made, dyed of the required colors to form the pattern, are passed over and under the warp-threads twice so as to bring the two ends of the pile to the front of the carpet, when the engaged end is cut, leaving the two ends of the material projecting, to form the pile. This is repeated in the same color, or



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

changed to suit the requirements of the design, and when one row is finished it is hammered closely down with a kind of comb, and another row is begun. Before a commencement of each row of the pile the warps, which are divided into two sets, are crossed, and a shoot of hemp or cotton is introduced between them; they are then crossed again by means of a treadle, and the weaving of the pile recommences. After a completion of several rows of pile, the projecting ends of it, which have only as yet been roughly cut, are carefully trimmed to the length which it is intended to assume."

Primitive  
Tools

So we see how primitive are the tools—the rude loom, a wooden or metal comb, a pair of shears are all. The process of weaving seems very simple; but much skill is needed in stretching the warp so as to have the spaces even; in tying the knot, which

## *The Story of the Rug*

is done entirely by hand, requiring great deftness; and in following the intricate designs, which are often carried in the mind of the weaver and handed down from generation to generation—each maker of the same design giving his work the individual touch. Sometimes the colors to be used are called off by one who has the work in charge; or again, where Americans and Europeans direct the weavers, colored drawings or samplers are followed. At times four or five persons work on a rug at the same time, each being responsible for two or more feet.

There are two methods of knotting the pile: one, the Senna or Persian knot, in which the two ends of the pile, after being wound around two separate threads of the warp, come to the surface between every space of the warp; the other, Ghiordes or Turkish knot, in which they come up between every

Two Kinds  
of Knots

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

two threads. Besides the pile carpets, the khilims and Cashmere rugs are worked with a smooth surface by means of a shuttle or needle.

Finish

The ends of rugs are finished in various ways: by leaving the loose warp ends to form a fringe, as in many Persian rugs, or with the woven web and fringe of the Turkoman fabrics, or like many of the Caucasian rugs, with narrow web and knotted fringe. The sides are either selvaged, made by winding the woof around the outer threads of the warp, or they are overcast with separate thread.

Time taken  
to make a  
Rug

The number of knots to the square inch determines the texture of the rug; fine Kirmans or Sennas have from four to six hundred or more knots to the square inch, while some Turkish rugs have as few as thirty. If we examine closely every tuft of wool, the end of a knot, we are able to form some

### *The Story of the Rug*

idea of the infinite patience and care required in this work. A pair of Senna rugs six feet four inches by four feet four inches, which were recently shown in New York, were of such fine texture that the designs seemed drawn in pencil lines. These real Meissonniers in warp and woof are said to have nine hundred and twenty-four knots to the square inch, and to have taken fifteen years to make. It is estimated that a skilful weaver can tie three knots a minute, so that by working eight hours a day he can complete a Kirman rug five feet by eight feet, containing four hundred knots to the square inch, in a little over four years. A rug of the same quality ten by twelve feet will require more than ten years to make; while a coarse modern Turkish rug, with forty knots to the square inch, will take less than two years.

When we bear this in mind, we

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Craft  
Poorly Paid      wonder how Oriental rugs can be sold as cheaply as they many times are. It is only because this handicraft is so poorly paid—from ten to fifteen cents a day is an average day's wages—that a rug which represents four years' work can be bought for eighty dollars.

Materials  
Used      Various materials are used in the making of Oriental rugs: wool of sheep and goats, silk, camel's hair, cotton, linen, and hemp. The Orient is renowned for its fine wool, the very best of which comes from Kirman, Cashmere, Kurdistan, and Angora. Doubtless the warm climate, soft, running water, excellent pasturage, as well as the breed of sheep, have much influence on the quality of the wool. Before being used it must be washed, sorted, cleaned again, carded, and spun into yarn—a strong thread for the warp, single for the woof, and double for the pile. And here, again,

## *The Story of the Rug*

the most primitive methods are employed. The carding is done by drawing the wool over the sharp ends of nails driven into a piece of wood. The spinning is all done by hand. Mr. Bryce gives us a picture of the people of Cilicia spinning as they move from place to place: "Each, like the fates of Catullus, bore a distaff in her hand, with a lump of wool upon her wrist, and this they plied as they drove their flocks before them."

The Kurds use the winter combings of sheep, called "*kurk*," which has the softness and luster of silk, for their choicest prayer-rugs. From Tibet the beautiful shawl-wool, or *pushmina*, is obtained from the down under the wool of the goat, and is used in making the finest grade of Indian rugs. Camel's hair, which is the long, woolly hair taken from the upper part of the legs, the under side of the neck,

"Kurk"

Pushmina

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

and the hump of the camel, is used in various districts, chiefly in the making of Hamadan, Mossoul, and Beluchistan rugs. Silk has been used from very early times in the making of rugs, sometimes as the warp, to give fineness of texture, as well as in the pile. Turkey, Persia, China, and India produce silk in great abundance. Some of the choicest specimens of antiques, especially in the work of the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, have gold or silver threads either woven into or worked over the warp. The so-called " Polish carpets " of this time have spots of the warp left without knots, and the gold or silver threads worked over the warp in the khilim stitch. Cotton, linen, and hemp are used in the warp and woof, as well as silk and wool.

Color      We always associate brilliant sunshine and warmth of coloring with the

## *The Story of the Rug*

East. The Oriental has a natural love of color, and his genius shows itself in the harmonious blending and contrasting of various hues. Surely he must have a deep sympathy for nature, since in no other way than out of his love and search for the beautiful in the fields about him could have come such varied tints, such strong, true, vital colors, and yet such artistic refinement and repose as one finds in many Eastern fabrics. He knows

Of splendor in the grass, of glory in the flower.

But the secret of the artistic effects and permanence of color in Oriental rugs is due to the use of animal and vegetable dyes. From very early times the Phenicians were renowned for a purple or crimson which they obtained from a mollusk in the Ægean Sea. The process of making the Tyrian purple is a lost one, but from sheep's blood

Secret of  
Artistic Col-  
oring

Animal Dyes



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

a brilliant scarlet is made; from kermes, the dried bodies of an insect known in ancient Egypt and still used, a beautiful red is obtained, as well as from lac, a resinous substance produced by an insect mainly upon the banyan-tree, and in more recent times from cochineal.

Vegetable  
Dyes

The vegetable dyes or extracts from the bark, stems, roots, blossoms, fruits, and seeds of plants are the wonder and admiration of the world. The Oriental blue, which they copied from cloudless skies, seas, and mountains, was very successful, and is preserved in tiles and pottery as well as in woven fabrics. We find it in all shades, from soft turquoise and the celestial blue of the Chinese to the deepest tint of the Persians. This was obtained from indigo, but it is only now and then that the results are now as satisfactory as in earlier days. The vegetable red,

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which in wool is a deep-toned, blood red, is from madder, which is raised in great quantities in Asia Minor. Yellow is made from various plants: the Persian berry giving a tawny yellow, larkspur a bright yellow, a fungus from the mulberry a greenish yellow, as well as turmeric, saffron, weld, and yellow berries, the unripe fruit of a shrub. Henna, so much used by the Persians in dyeing their nails and beards, gives a reddish orange. Brown is made from valonia, and from the green husks of walnuts. Shades of purple are produced from various combinations of indigo and red; green from indigo and yellow; and black from indigo and brown. Some colors are more durable than others; red has preserving qualities, while black often destroys the fibers of the fabric.

The whole chromatic scale of colors is much influenced by the degree

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Colors in-  
fluenced by  
Water, etc.

of softness and the temperature of the water as well as by other qualities which it may possess, modified by atmospheric conditions, such as length of time of exposure to air and sunshine, the degree of sunshine, and the number of "dippings." The art of dyeing, for it is an art, has many secrets. A color is often produced in one family for generations without others knowing the process of obtaining it. The work of dyeing is confined almost exclusively to men, who gather the materials from the fields about or cultivate some needed plant in a little garden-patch in the summer-time, and spend the greater part of the year in preparing the dyes and coloring the wool. Often the color runs out in the making of a rug, for many times the wool is dyed from day to day as it is needed, and it is impossible to obtain the exact shade again, as the same con-

## *The Story of the Rug*

ditions are not available; but this sometimes adds to the value of the rug rather than detracts, for often a glimmering light over the whole is due to a change in the shades of wool.

The introduction of anilin, or coal-tar, dyes is destroying dyeing as an art. These dyes are cruder, less artistic, and are not permanent; but they are cheaper, and can be obtained with far less labor. Where anilin dyes are used the art is reduced to a commercial basis, and no individual pride is taken in it, while the position of a dyer of the old school was an honored one in the community. Both in Persia and in Smyrna rigid laws forbidding the use of the cheaper dyes exist; but Russia has made no effort to maintain the old, permanent dyes in her new possessions. She seems to have no thought of preserving the native arts, but is intent only on pushing her

Anilin  
Dyes

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

boundaries and finding a market for her own products. There are constantly brought to this country from Turkey, from the Caucasus, from Turkestan, from India, and even from some Persian districts, rugs of the crudest coloring and harshness. One must be constantly on his guard in the purchasing of Oriental rugs if he would have the genuine old dyes. An expert can tell at a glance a poor dye, but one not accustomed to judging can test the dyes by putting water on the rug. Permanent dyes will not run, while anilin dyes do. The old dyes in rugs are as lasting as the beautiful colors in old stained-glass windows, which time tones down but does not impair.

Charm of  
Design

It is when we come to the study of design in Oriental rugs that we are held fascinated; for a carpet unfolds itself like the plot of a story. The

## *The Story of the Rug*

predominating color first attracts the eye, then the general scheme of design, and lastly the pattern in detail with the figures symbolical of natural objects, that fasten the attention and make daily life with a rug a constant delight, with its ever new phases of beauty. No two rugs are ever exactly alike, for while in certain types of rugs, like the Bokhara and Saraband, the general scheme is the same, little variations in color combinations give different effects. Each individual weaves something of herself into the rug, and so, like any other work of art, it has the charm of the individual touch, the fascination of a personal history.

The origin of design is surrounded by mystery, but it is generally conceded that the first designs were geometrical, copying, doubtless, the plaiting of rush mats, which preceded car-

Origin of  
Design

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Persian Garden imitated  
in Persian  
Carpet

pets in the evolution of floor coverings. Later, as the artistic instincts of these early weavers were developed, they wove into their fabrics the beauty in form as well as color which they saw about them. Walter Crane, in his *Basis of Design*, would make the floral Persian carpet the imitation of the Persian garden, for he says: "The love of the sheltered, walled-in, and natural garden is very evident in their literature, and the influence of their flora upon their designs of all kinds is evident enough. The idea of the Eastern paradise is a garden. We have it in the Bible in the Garden of Eden—an enclosed pleasure or park, full of choice trees and rare flowers, animals of the chase, and birds. This idea recurs constantly in Persian design. The very scheme of the typical carpet seems derived from it—a rich, varicolored field, hedged about with its borders.

## *The Story of the Rug*

The field is frequently obviously intended for a field of flowers, and sometimes suggests a wood or an orchard of fruit-trees."

According to design, Oriental rugs may be classed as of purely Aryan, or floral type, including Persian and East Indian rugs, of Turanian, or geometrical, patterns embracing Turkoman and Caucasian carpets, and of a combination of the two, as represented in Turkish, Kurdish, and Chinese weaves.

Classes  
according to  
Design

The Oriental has imitated nature or translated her into textiles, sometimes very literally, and again with great freedom. In the sumptuous old Persian carpets, intended for regal homes, full hunting scenes with a great deal of action are wonderfully pictured: hunters on horseback, with their dogs, among the forest-trees, are in pursuit of animals of the chase; and in others, more quiet landscapes, with trees, flow-

Imitations of  
Nature



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

ers, and birds, are imitated. One which Mr. Stebbing describes in his book on the Holy Carpet is of this nature: "Various trees of the forest, planted in horizontal lines, are connected on each line by the serpentine course of a stream, forming shallow pools, with a growth of wild flowers on the bank—the mud-flats left by the receding water very carefully indicated in the weaving."

Trees and vines, the rose, tulip, narcissus, pink, flower of henna, and numerous other flowers, are so truly copied that they are easily distinguished; but additional forms are used, which need more study to place. The palm, which is a favorite design in Cashmere shawls, Khorasan and Saraband rugs, and is copied in others, is considered by some a conventionalized palm-leaf, and by others a likeness of the loop of the sacred river of India, for from a

## *The Story of the Rug*

sacred temple, looking toward the Jhelum River, every worshiper as he rises from prayer at noonday sees the river as a silver thread making this figure on the green plain. The palmette, a little cup with fan-shaped leaves about it, may have had its origin in the "tree of life," or in the flame of the sacred fire of the Persians. The rosette, said to resemble the "star of Bethlehem," one of the early spring flowers of Persia, is much used in border designs and in the formation of other patterns. It is the center of the Herati, or "fish pattern," which consists of the rosette enclosed in curved lines, resembling the cloud bands of the Chinese, alternating with a diamond surrounding the same figure, from four points of which are storks. By substituting the stalks of the yellow flowers of the flower of henna for the rosette with curved

Palmette

Rosette

Herati

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*


“Guli  
Henna”  
Flower and  
Knop

lines we have the “guli henna” pattern. The flower and knop pattern, so universally used in all ornament, is said to have had its origin in the Egyptian lotus, or the scarlet tulip of Babylonia. The wavy lines connecting the designs in borders suggest vines or the meandering of a river.

Geometrical  
Designs

When we come to geometrical designs, of which there is almost an endless variety, it requires a great stretch of the imagination to see nature forms “bodied forth,” and perhaps they are more symbolical of nature than attempts at representation. We find the square, triangle, star, rhomboid, hexagon, octagon, medallion, circle, cross, straight lines forming a fretwork, the Greek border, reciprocal saw-teeth, Vandykes, the “barber-pole” stripe, the swastika, the “latch hook,” cup-shaped figures, and curious indescribable forms.

## *The Story of the Rug*

There is thought by many to be a Symbolism  
hidden meaning in all designs in Oriental rugs if we only knew the key by which to read them. "Carpets were regarded in the East," says Edward Stebbing, "in a higher light than among ourselves, and symbolism was a powerful motive, affecting largely the design." There is a deep significance in many symbols: the circle represents eternity, without beginning or end; the zigzag, water or lightning; the hour-glass figure, formed by two triangles, fire and water; the star of six points, Allah; the swastika, , a symbol found among many primitive peoples, and said to represent the supreme deity of the Aryans and the motion of the earth on its axis, health, happiness, and good luck. The "latch hook" and the Greek border are thought to be modifications of the swastika, and to carry the same meaning. A meandering line

### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

is a symbol of continuity of life, or endlessness of eternal life; the Chinese cloud band, of immortality. The tree, always associated with religious belief, symbolizes Divine power and bounty; the palm signifies a blessing or benediction; the lotus typifies new life, or immortality. The whole rug is said to be the emblem of eternity, and the pattern the changing world of nature. Verses from the Koran give a peculiar religious significance, and are often woven into rugs intended for mosques. Lines from the Persian poets expressing good-will are sometimes found, and sometimes a date or signature. The following inscription is woven in Arabic characters in the Holy Carpet of the mosque of Ardebil: "I have no refuge in the world other than thy threshold. My head has no protection other than this porchway. The work of the slave of this holy place, Mak-

## *The Story of the Rug*

sond of Kashan, in the year 946" (A. D. 1553). A bead or little tuft of wool or a tassel are thought to keep away the "evil eye," as are also some irregularities of design or the little S-shaped figures.

The Mohammedan religion forbids the use of animal forms, so that floral and geometrical designs are more often found in rugs. But as the Persians are not of the orthodox Moslem faith, but of the Shaiah sect, they exercise greater freedom in this respect, often representing animals of the chase and birds. In some nomad rugs, too, we find little conventionalized figures of animals scattered through the field, especially in Kasak, Shirvan, Daghestan, and Kurdistan rugs. The dragon, bat, tortoise, butterfly, and deer figure in Chinese rugs.

Animal  
Figures

The luster of Oriental rugs is secured in various ways. In an antique

Luster

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

the polish is due to the tread of soft sandals and bare feet, for the Oriental never walks with heavy shoes upon so rare a fabric. It is sometimes due to the quality of the wool, for certain grades take on a sheen more readily than others. Many methods are resorted to to-day to give rugs this quality, which is meant to be indicative of age and add to their beauty. They are "treated" with chemicals and mangled, buried in the sand, and harshly used until the luster appears. This treatment many times injures the wearing qualities of the rug.

Treated  
Rugs

An Antique      The question is often asked, "What is an antique?" An antique, it is generally conceded, must have age, at least fifty years, animal or vegetable dyes, and a lustrous pile.

Value      The value of a rug is dependent on its permanent dyes, its age, its texture, or the number of knots to a square

## *The Story of the Rug*

inch, the beauty of design and color, or the unusualness of pattern and coloring, the material of which it is made, and its size.

There are a number of reasons for the deterioration of certain modern fabrics: first, the demand has been so much greater than the supply that means have been taken to increase the number produced, so that there has been more haste in the making of them; second, anilin dyes have been introduced into the East by Europeans, and as they are much cheaper and more easily used they are taking the place of permanent dyes; and third, designs of foreign origin and spirit have replaced the old patterns.

The ability to classify rugs as to country and district comes to one with the study of them. The design formerly indicated the district, but it is not so to-day; a more intimate knowl-

Deterioration  
of Modern  
Rugs

Know Rugs  
by Study



### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

edge is necessary. How to know Oriental rugs, to fully appreciate all their art qualities, and to be able to judge of their value, can only be learned after living with them, studying them with sympathy, as you would a poem or a picture, and handling them until this choice form of Eastern art becomes a delight and an inspiration.

## II

### PERSIAN RUGS

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- |              |                          |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Khorasan. | 8. Saraband.             |
| 2. Meshed.   | 9. Feraghan.             |
| 3. Herat.    | 10. Saruk.               |
| 4. Shiraz.   | 11. Herez—Gorevan.       |
| 5. Kirman    | Serapi.                  |
| and          | Bakshaish.               |
| Kermanshah.  | 12. Hamadan.             |
| 6. Tabriz.   | 13. Sultanabad.          |
| 7. Senna.    | 14. Ispahan, and others. |

## II

### PERSIAN RUGS

PERSIA, the first permanent home of Country  
carpet weaving, while robbed of much  
of her political power, and only a  
shadow of her former self, still holds  
up to the world ideals in the textile art  
well worth a careful study. Her  
country, to-day of twice the area of  
France, extending seven hundred miles  
west and east from Turkey to Afghan-  
istan and Beluchistan, and nine hun-  
dred miles north and south from Rus-  
sian Turkestan to the Persian Gulf, has  
a wonderful variety of surface, cli-  
mate, products, and people. The low-  
lands about the Caspian Sea, with an  
almost tropical vegetation and a humid  
atmosphere, are in great contrast to

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

the parched plains and dry air of the districts farther south; at Shiraz nature is prodigal of beauty, and in central Khorasan it is sparing. Her hillsides and valleys furnish pasturage for large flocks of sheep and goats, and her fertile plains produce silk and cotton in abundance, so that all the materials for rug-making are of home growth.

Cities

Persia has few cities: Teheran, the capital, Tabriz and Hamadan in the north, Meshed in the east, Ispahan in the center, and Yezd and Kirman in the south, all connected as of old by lines of caravan travel, and the homes of the educated and commercial people, who still are lovers of ease and luxury. The present Shah's palace at Teheran has many exquisite old carpets in the public apartments, among them the throne carpet, brought with the famous Peacock throne from Delhi by Nadir Shah, and those of his pri-

Shah's  
Carpets

## *Persian Rugs*

vate rooms are said to be “ magnificent soft carpets, of lovely design. One a deliciously soft Kirman, of fascinating artistic green, one in red from Sultanabad, and others from Ispahan, but most valuable of all a white rug from Sultanabad, on which he stands when receiving in audience.”

The people of Persia are of many nations, the old Iranian stock being purest in the south; but we find Turks, Armenians, Arabs, Turkomans, and Europeans. Of her nine millions of people, most of them are a simple, primitive, pastoral people, living in rude huts in villages or in the black tents of the nomad tribes. Of the latter there are said to be one million, who pasture their flocks in the southern plains in the winter and go to the mountain districts in the summer-time.

That so rude and uncultivated a people possess skill and taste in design and

People

Artistic  
Fabrics

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Greatest  
Art Era

color as shown in their fabrics is a marvel. Like David of old, their out-of-door life and intimacy with nature gives them a love of the beautiful and an artistic sense seldom seen. Here we find the artizan, the artist, for woven into their hand-work is a love of the beautiful, a warmth of nature, a suggestion of comfort and luxury, an appreciation of grace in form, and an honesty of purpose which are so plainly told that he who runs may read. This poetic and artistic feeling of Persia has from very early times found expression in the fine fabrics for which she has so long been famous. The highest art was reached in the sixteenth century, under the fostering care of Shah Abbas, who lived at Is-pahan, but whose influence extended to Shiraz, Kirman, Meshed, Yezd, and, indeed, throughout Persia. We see a most wonderful effect produced

## *Persian Rugs*

in the work of this period by a blending of the Renaissance art of Italy with that of the descendants of the early Aryan, and with just a touch of Chinese influence, for artists from Italy and China were the teachers of this period. The floral designs—the rose of Iran, the “tree of life,” the trailing vines—were all Persian, but the cloud bands were Chinese; and the delicate tracteries and arrangement show the same art as Raphael’s Stanza at Rome—the soft charm of the Persian was there, with an added beauty of design. And so for two thousand years or more Persia has borrowed ideas and stamped them with an individuality of her own.

True to her traditions of the past, great effort has been made by the Government to maintain the old standards in beautiful and artistic designs, permanent vegetable dyes, velvety texture,

Old  
Standards  
Maintained



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

and blending of colors. There was an apprehension at one time that the introduction of anilin dyes would ruin this industry, but the Government guards against it by law. A heavy penalty is attached to the importation or use of anilin dyes. So that the Persian rug of to-day shows a closer adherence to the old types than do the rugs of districts farther west, which is due largely to the inaccessibility of Persia and to the action of the Shah.

### Designs

In design, whether made in the royal palace, in a village hut, or in a tent of a nomad, a Persian rug can usually be distinguished by its realistic floral patterns with borders of wavy lines connecting floral figures in harmony with the field.

### Color

In color, harmony rather than contrasts predominates, giving marvelous combinations and blending of tones. Dark blues and reds are favorite back-

## *Persian Rugs*

grounds for the display of floral patterns.

There is a great variety in texture Texture  
from the close weave of the Senna, Kirman, and Tabriz rugs to the soft Shiraz and the coarse Hamadan rugs; but as a family, Persian rugs are of fine wool, with occasionally camel's hair or silk for the pile, with the warp and woof of cotton, tied with the Senna knot.

### KHORASAN

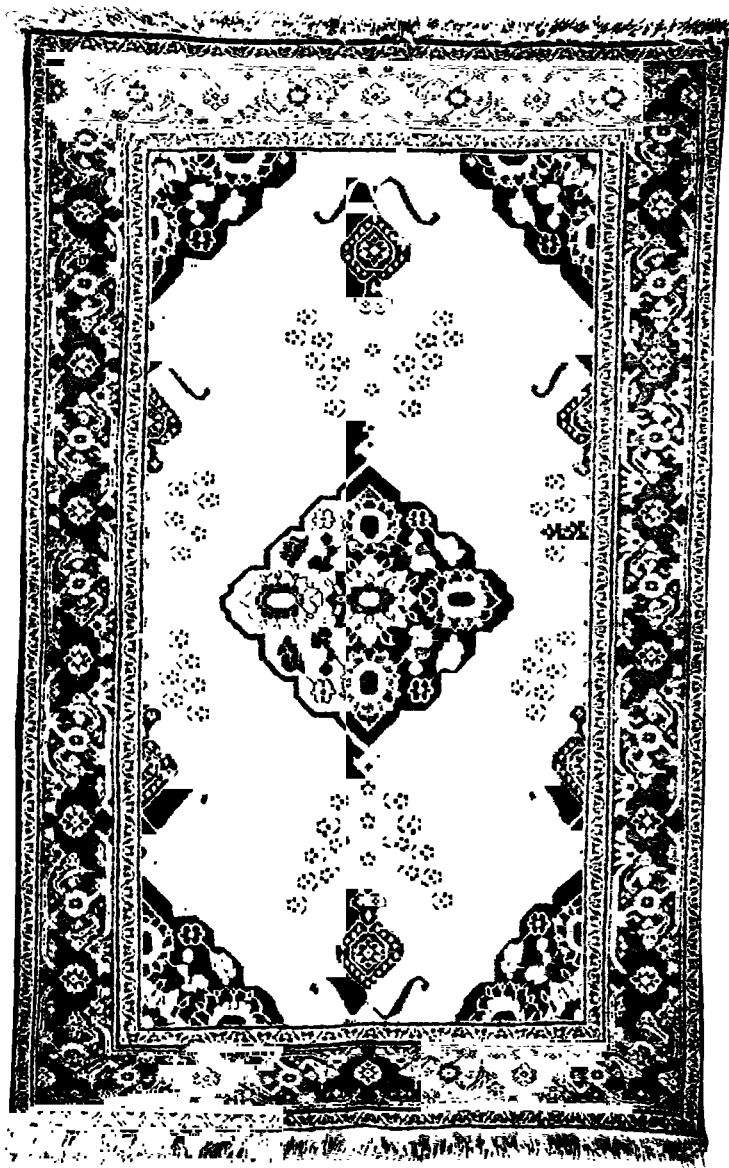
Khorasan, "the Land of the Sun," Country and  
its People  
is the northeastern province of Persia. Separated as it is from Russia by mountains and from Kirman by a salt desert, little or no European influence has reached this part of Persia. Within its borders we find alpine scenery, luxuriously fertile fields, desert tracts, and as great a variety of climate and people. The descendants of the an-

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

cient Irans constitute only a small part of the inhabitants, for we find Arabs, Turkomans, Turks, Armenians, Jews, and a large nomad people. The women are still the weavers of rugs, both in the villages and among the nomad tribes.

**Rugs**      The Khorasan rugs are among the finest of the antiques, and reflect something of the old Persian culture. They have a wonderful sheen, due to the fine wool of which they are made; and an unusual artistic effect is produced by the uneven trimming of the pile, which makes the figures of the design stand out from the background. They have the warmth and softness for which the ancient Iranian fabrics were famous.

**Designs**      On a background of rich blue or red, floral designs in elaborate patterns are worked out, some showy and others with small, intricate patterns. Often the medallion effect is made use of,



KHORASAN

Loaned by Mannheimer Bros., St. Paul, Minn.



## *Persian Rugs*

with the field and corners well covered with flowers and tracteries; or with a bold central figure on a rich, plain field. A favorite design in the old fabrics is a large palm in each corner, extending to a rosette in the center; and frequently the small palm and rosette cover the entire field. Figures of animals and birds occur with the same grace and beauty as in the old Kirman rugs. One of the chief characteristics, and a distinguishing one, in both old and new, is the many borders, sometimes ten or twelve, usually one being wide with many narrow ones on either side. These all have the wavy lines, connecting rosettes, the palm, or other floral patterns. The many borders add great dignity to this rug, and form a beautiful setting for the central field, giving to the whole a distinguished air.

Soft, rich colors predominate, this

Colors

### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

being due to the fine, soft quality of the wool of this district. The background is often of the old Persian blue, or a rich wine-color, and occasionally one with a peculiar purplish-pink cast is seen. The new fabrics nearly equal the old, and only time is needed to give them the mellowness so characteristic of the antiques.

Material and  
Finish

The material is of the best: the warp of cotton, the woof of cotton or wool, and the pile of lustrous wool. The sides are overcast, and the ends have, usually, a fringe of loose warp.

The Khorasan is a most satisfactory rug, beautiful in color, durable, and pliable, giving an air of elegance to a room. It is especially suited to living-rooms, libraries, and halls, and comes in all sizes. Most antiques are oblong.

## *Persian Rugs*

### MESHED

Meshed, the capital of Khorasan, The Mecca  
of Persia in the northeastern part of the province, is famous not only for its rugs, but as the holy city, the Mecca of the Mohammedans of Persia. Here is the shrine of their prophet, Imám Rizá, to which thousands turn their steps yearly; here was the home of Haroun-al-Rashid, and near by that of Omar Khayyam; so that gathered about its history are the most sacred of religious rites, the charm of Haroun's life, and the songs of the tent-maker poet.

It is hard to realize or estimate the Influence on  
Rug Designs influence of such a religious center on the industry of rug-weaving, especially in the scattering of knowledge of design; for often there are from five to six thousand strangers in the city, each bent upon worshiping at the shrine so



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

renowned for the splendor of its decorations, for its iridescent tiles, and its rich carpets. Many a pilgrim brings his gift of a carpet, upon which he has spent the greatest care in designing and weaving, to leave as a pledge of his devotion, and not unlikely purchases another as a memento of his pilgrimage.

Character-  
istics

The Meshed rugs are easily recognized as of the Khorasan variety, as they follow much the same designs, materials, and finish, but are of finer texture and of lighter shades—pink, blue, and ivory being favorite colors. Sometimes a rug in two tones of ivory is seen. The old Meshed rugs were of wonderfully fine texture and color, due largely to the quality of the wool; to-day they are brighter than the Khorasan, and of more even nap. They are heavy, durable rugs, with long pile, close weave, and imperishable dyes. They come in all sizes, from four by

## *Persian Rugs*

six feet up to ten by twenty-five feet or larger.

### HERAT

Just across the border of Khorasan, Country  
in Afghanistan, is the old Persian city  
of Herat. Situated as it is in the di-  
rect line of travel between Bokhara  
and Cashmere, as well as between  
Meshed and the East, we find it the  
market for fabrics made in Khorasan  
as well as in and about the city itself.  
Its four bazaars, under one great dome,  
are the most famous in this part of  
the East. The sheep of this district are  
noted for the fine quality of wool, and  
the silk is of home growth. In Shah  
Abbas's time the city became the center  
of learning and culture. The rugs of  
that and later times were of the old  
Herati pattern, in great refinement of  
color; but since it has become a part  
of Afghanistan we see a "certain wild

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

grandeur," corresponding to the Afghan character, woven into their work.

### Design

Even to-day the Herati pattern, the rosette enclosed in elongated serrated leaves or cloud bands and the diamond surrounding a rosette with its eight storks, making an all-over pattern, is universally used. Whenever the palm pattern is made use of the figures are always faced in one direction, differing from the Saraband rugs in this respect; and the influence of India is sometimes seen in the elongation of the palm.

### Colors

The field is usually dark blue or old red, with sometimes a purplish tone, like the effect of haze on distant hills; the center border is green, with ivory, yellow, red, and blue in the figures, all so well blended as to give an effect of repose.

### Materials and Texture

The Herati rugs are closely woven, of fine wool and good dyes. When

## *Persian Rugs*

silk is used, it is in the warp, where it does not show, but gives an unusual fineness to the work. The modern rugs are somewhat heavier than the Khorasan, of silky, soft texture, and tied with the Ghiordes knot. They are a durable rug, of great brilliancy.

Their finish is like the Khorasan rug. In size they are from five to eight feet by ten to twenty feet, and also in runners from six, seven, to eight feet by twenty feet. Beautiful saddlebags are also made.

Finish and  
Size

## SHIRAZ

In one of the most beautiful spots of Persia, if we may believe those who have written about it, near the ruins of the ancient city of Persepolis, is Shiraz, now the capital of Farsistan, famous in history for its poets, its gardens, its nightingales, and its splendor.

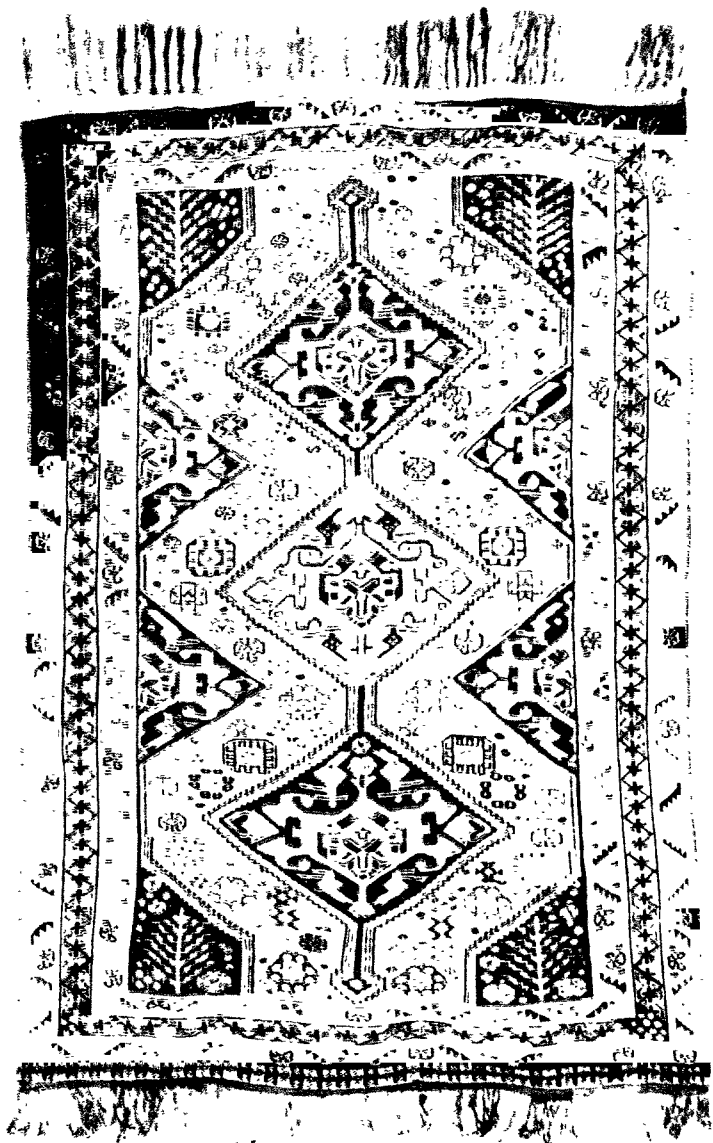
Country and  
its People

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

There is a certain fascination about the place, its history, and its people; and it is pleasant to linger over the story of this valley, surrounded by mountains, and call to mind that Cyrus the Great is buried near, that Alexander spent many days among its people, that here the Magi started on their wonderful journey to see the King, that Shah Abbas loved it, and that the poets Sadi and Hafiz have given it a high place in the realm of song. Its people, who are gay and light-hearted, and who live an out-of-door life, pride themselves on their purity of Aryan blood. There are many nomad Fars who pass north and south at various seasons, taking their flocks to the highlands in summer and returning to the plains in the winter.

Rugs

As the antique fabrics were often made for the rulers of Persia, and as the sheep of this district produce a fine



ANTIQUE SHIRAZ

Loaned by Joseph Wild & Co., New York City



## *Persian Rugs*

grade of wool, there are some very interesting old carpets, of very soft texture and silky luster; many of the so-called "Mecca" carpets are of Shiraz make.

It is hard to distinguish Shiraz rugs by the designs, as they are so varied; we find the floral designs of many Persian districts copied, as well as the stripes and geometrical pattern of the Caucasus. A favorite design is a number of medallions through the center, with flowers and birds scattered through the field; another is the diagonal shawl stripes, with little figures in them; another the palm pattern enlarged. The prayer-rug has a square *mihrab* instead of the usual point. But they have two distinguishing marks: the sides are overcast in two or more colors, with little tassels of colored wool along the sides or at the corners; and the ends are usually fin-

Distinguish-  
ing Marks



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

ished with a colored selvage, worked with a needle, and with a long fringe. These two features make it easy to identify a Shiraz rug. The borders are usually wide, with large figures.

Material,  
Texture, and  
Size

The warp and woof are always of wool, of medium fineness, and the pile is of soft wool; and as they are loosely woven they are, perhaps, the softest rug made. For this reason they do not always lie well upon the floor, but make beautiful couch covers. They come in medium sizes, from four by six to five by eight feet, with a few large sizes. The saddle-bags are the finest known.

### KIRMAN AND KERMANSHAH

Country  
and People

The term Kirman we apply to the antique fabrics of the district of Kirman, which lies between the Desert of Lut and the Arabian Sea—the most southeastern of Persian provinces. As

## *Persian Rugs*

Kirman lies out of the line of travel, its products are hardly contaminated by European influence. Its inhabitants are a scattered people, of Iranian blood, who, now living in villages, and again wandering tribes, raise sheep with extremely soft and silky wool, and goats with hair equal to that of the Cashmere goat; and the water of the country possesses chemical properties, making it possible to obtain perfect colors.

For softness and delicacy of texture, splendor, harmony, and mellowness of color, for purity of drawing and accuracy of detail, these rugs may be called the gems of the loom. For generations the art has been handed down of putting the tree of life, the rose of Iran, fruits, flowers, birds, and animals, with floral creepers and shoots, winding in endless familiarity, upon a delicate gray or ivory field, sur-

Gems or  
Loom

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

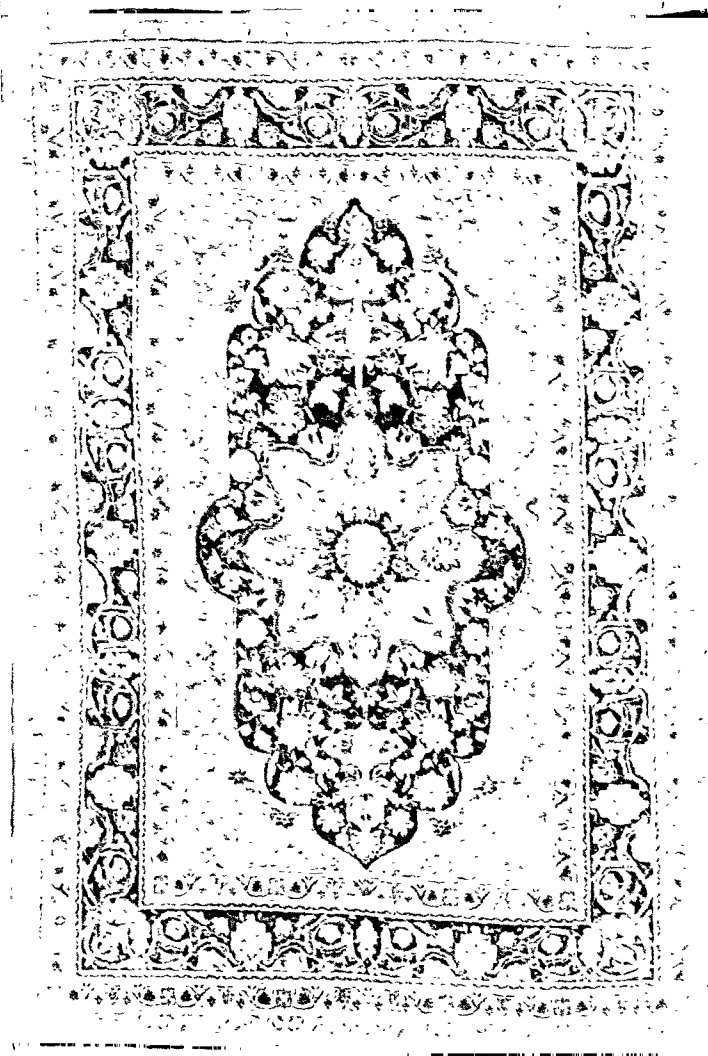
rounded by borders with wavy lines and floral patterns, producing an effect of floral richness unsurpassed. Sometimes there are vases filled with red roses, arranged in rows, across the delicate field, and bordered by a frame of deeper tint of ivory, on which are scattered various flowers, with now and then a rose like the center.

Colors and  
Texture

The colors, always rich and refined, are dark ivory, fawn tones, rose shades, greens, grays, and blues. The close weave, soft texture, and clear colors proclaim these rugs the work of artists. Many are almost as lustrous as silk, and more to be desired.

Modern  
Kermanshah

There are a few antiques in this country; but the modern Kirman or Kermanshah rug, made throughout the district, rivals the old. The name Kermanshah used to be given to rugs made in the village of Kermanshah, in the mountains southwest of Ardelan,



KERMANSHAH

Loaned by Mr. John H. Langton, New York City



## *Persian Rugs*

bordering on Turkey, where, at one time, rugs resembling the Kurdish weaves were made; but to-day, according to Mr. Wigham, in *The Persian Problem*, "there are no rugs of any value made in Kermanshah." At Kirman the Government takes great interest in the rug industry, and there is a factory in the governor's palace where the old designs are faithfully reproduced. Men and boys do much of the weaving, often in dark, underground places, on account of the dryness of the air.

The medallion center, with field surrounding it of soft ivory, covered with vines and floral designs in delicate pinks, blues, and greens, is a common design, as well as the combinations of the elongated palm with floral patterns and birds. Like the Khorasan rugs, they often have several borders, wonderfully shaded.

Design

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Texture and Material      They are a beautifully made rug, often having as many as four hundred knots to the square inch, but are not as closely woven as the Tabriz. The pile is of fine wool, which takes a luster, and the warp and woof are of cotton.

Finish and Size      The sides are overcast, and the ends have a narrow web and fringe. They are made in all sizes, from mats to large carpet sizes.

They are a popular rug for drawing-rooms and reception-rooms, where delicate tints are required.

### TABRIZ

City      Tabriz, the capital of Azerbaijan, the northwest province of Persia, and the home of the heir to the throne of Persia, is the center of a fertile country, with fine pasture-lands for flocks of sheep and goats. The city, as it is the nearest point in the district to the Cau-

## *Persian Rugs*

casus railroad, is a great rug market for the surrounding villages, and yearly manufactures hundreds of rugs within its borders.

Tabriz rugs, while of fine texture, and with some resemblance to the Kermanshah rugs, show their newness by lack of perfect shading, depth of color, and brilliancy of sheen. Their designs prove a strong European influence, and are lacking in the true, Oriental spirit. On their face they tell plainly that they are rugs made by people who are not putting themselves into the work, but producing for the market.

Character-  
istics of  
Tabriz Rugs

Although the coloring is good, usually of vegetable dyes, it is often brilliant, and combined so as to produce contrasts rather than the rich harmony of the antique carpets of Persia. They lack the charm of the genuinely Oriental work, such as the Kirman and Khorasan rugs.

Colors

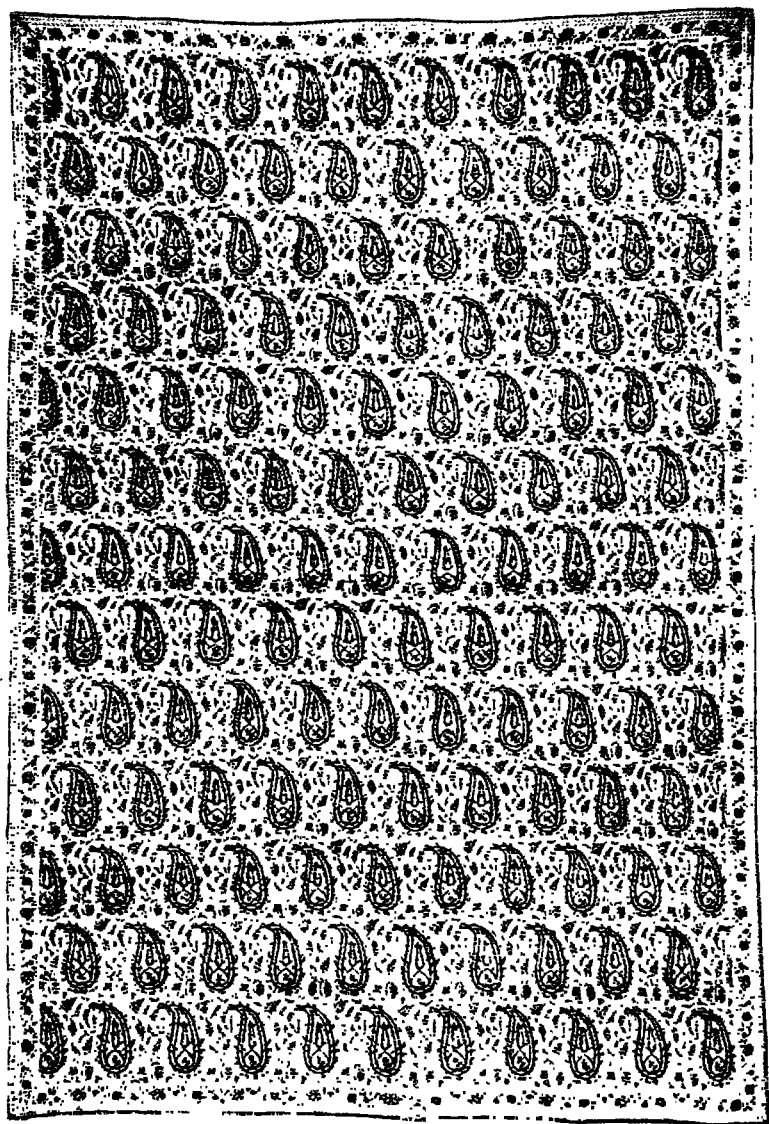


## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

**Designs**      The designs vary: many old Persian patterns are combined with new forms, of which the medallion center, surrounded with a field of solid color covered with intricate floral designs, is a favorite. The regularity and exactness of pattern give them the appearance of machine-made rugs. Sometimes inscriptions from the Koran or Persian poets, enclosed in oblong figures, are woven into the borders.

**Texture and Material**      In texture, these rugs are firm, and, from the close weave, inflexible. The warp and woof are of cotton; and the pile, of short, harsh wool, very closely clipped, seldom takes a luster.

**Size**      They are made in all sizes and colors, from mats to the large carpet sizes. One can have any pattern, size, or coloring made to order, showing how much European and American influences control them. Very many Tabriz rugs in our market have been



ANTIQUE ROYAL SENNA

Loaned by Kent-Costikyan, New York City



## *Persian Rugs*

made from designs and color schemes furnished by importers; and, as it is impossible for the Western mind to see things with the eye of the Oriental, these fabrics lack the true Iranian spirit.

### SENNA OR SEHNA

In the northwestern part of Ardelan, Country and  
People separated from Kermanshah by the Zagros Mountains, is Senna, in the very center of one of the great rug-producing districts of Persia. Situated as this tribe or clan is, near to the Caucasus and surrounded by Kurds and by people who have yielded to European influence, they have had strength of character to maintain their own ideas of rug-making, and have given their name to a fabric which stands among the best, both in ancient and modern times, for good dyes, fine texture, and harmonious colors.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

**Design**      Conservative as these people are, they adhere to a few designs, either the palm or the "fish pattern," in such minute all-over patterns as to give the effect of a mosaic; or with the center divided into medallions, sometimes arranged one within another. They usually have but three borders, the center one wider than the other two, with roses, rosettes, and wavy lines on a red or yellow field. A most exquisite antique recently brought to this country had one medallion, with a cartouch at each end, which, together with the corners, was filled with a small Herati pattern, on a shaded wine-colored field. The borders were seven in number.

**Colors**      The colors are usually subdued reds, blues, and yellows, with some lighter shades—ivory, pink, and green—beautifully blended.

These rugs are of fine texture and

## *Persian Rugs*

material, with warp and woof of cotton, linen, or silk, and the pile of a silky wool, very closely clipped, giving the appearance of tapestry. Occasionally a rug is seen of such fine pencil lines that it is hard to realize that the knots were put in by hand alone. The dexterity of the women of the Orient is exemplified by this weave of rugs.

Texture and  
Material

The ends have narrow web, with fringe at one end, and the sides are overcast in red cotton or silk. They are made in small sizes, about five by eight feet. The Royal Senna is of the finest material, and nearly square, for use as a saddle cover.

Finish and  
Size

A khilim is a rug made without pile, woven with the woof wound around the pile threads by means of a shuttle, making a fabric alike on both sides. Many times little open-work spaces appear, due to the fact that the parts of one color are put in at the

Senna  
Khilim

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

same time, and with change in color a new warp-thread is taken up, leaving an open space. The Senna khilim has designs like the rugs of the district, with very small open-work spaces, on account of the fine threads and small pattern. It is the best and most artistic khilim of small size suitable for hangings and coverings.

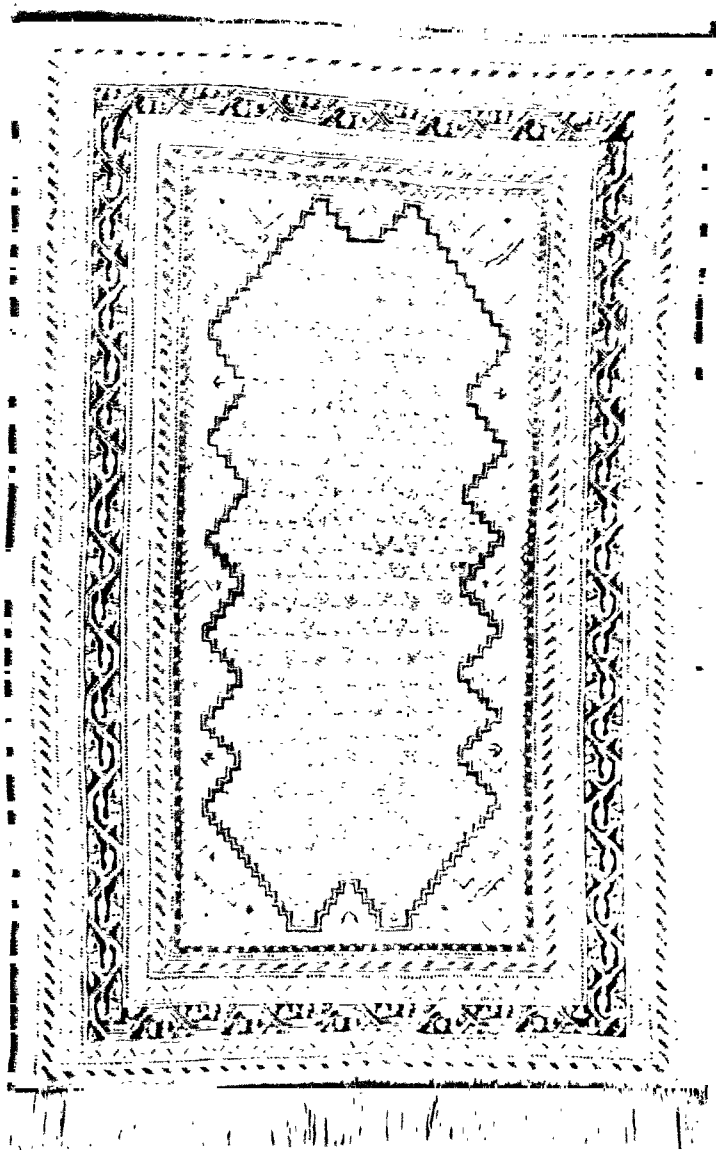
### SARABAND

Moderns the  
Antique

The Saraband rugs are made in the mountain district of Sarawan, just south of Feraghan. Here we find a people who adhere in their rug-making to all the traditions of the past. There have been no innovations here: the modern is the antique in fine, close weave, quality, and design.

Design

Rows of the small palm pattern, each row facing in an opposite direction, cover the entire center, of dark blue, rich red, ivory, or rose shade, making



SARABAND

Loaned by Mr. Myron J. Bird, New York City





## *Persian Rugs*

a most attractive and beautiful rug, one that finds favor with most people. Whether this design is in imitation of the loop of the sacred river of India, or, as Professor Goodyear would have it, its origin is in the lotus-flower, the fact remains that this device is known as the Saraband pattern. It is copied by the makers of Mossoul, Kurdish, and other rugs. Artistic borders are numerous, one with wavy lines connecting palm patterns on an ivory ground, and the narrow ones with wavy lines and rosettes, all of which are often bounded on the inner and outer edge by Vandykes in blue.

These rugs are of fine texture, and of Material and Finish closely woven, closely cut pile of wool, which grows silky with age. The warp and woof are of cotton. The ends are finished, one with narrow web and the other with fringe; the sides are overcast in red wool.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

**Sizes**      They come in sizes from three to five by four to nine feet and from six to nine to twelve by twenty feet, and also in runners from two and a half to four by ten to twenty feet.

### FERAGHAN

**Country**      The plain of Feraghan, seven thousand feet above the sea, surrounded by mountains, lies just west of the line of travel between Teheran and Ispahan. The mountains of this region resemble the Highlands of Scotland, and in the clannishness of the people and their feuds they remind one of Scott's stories of Scottish border life. The hillsides, where large flocks find pasturage, are radiant with flowers—the tulip, iris, narcissus, carnation, red anemone, scarlet poppy, yellow snapdragon, flower of henna, and others dot nature's carpet with brilliant colorings. So that perhaps this is one rea-

## *Persian Rugs*

son for the close all-over floral patterns of the old Feraghans, which are among the finest rugs of the old looms.

There are two characteristic designs—one, the Herati, with its flowers enclosed in cloud bands, like the Herat rugs, and the other, the “flower of henna,” its tree-like shapes of yellow flowers arranged in rows through the carpet and surrounded by a profusion of floral designs. Sometimes a medallion center, with the tulip and other flowers, is set in the center of a floral field; or, again, from free and graceful curves in the center are flower-stalks united with rhomboids, with flowers from the center; but whatever the design, the garlands of flowers are in subdued colors. The borders are an important feature, of which the ground of the widest is often of a soft, restful green, with wavy lines connecting floral patterns.

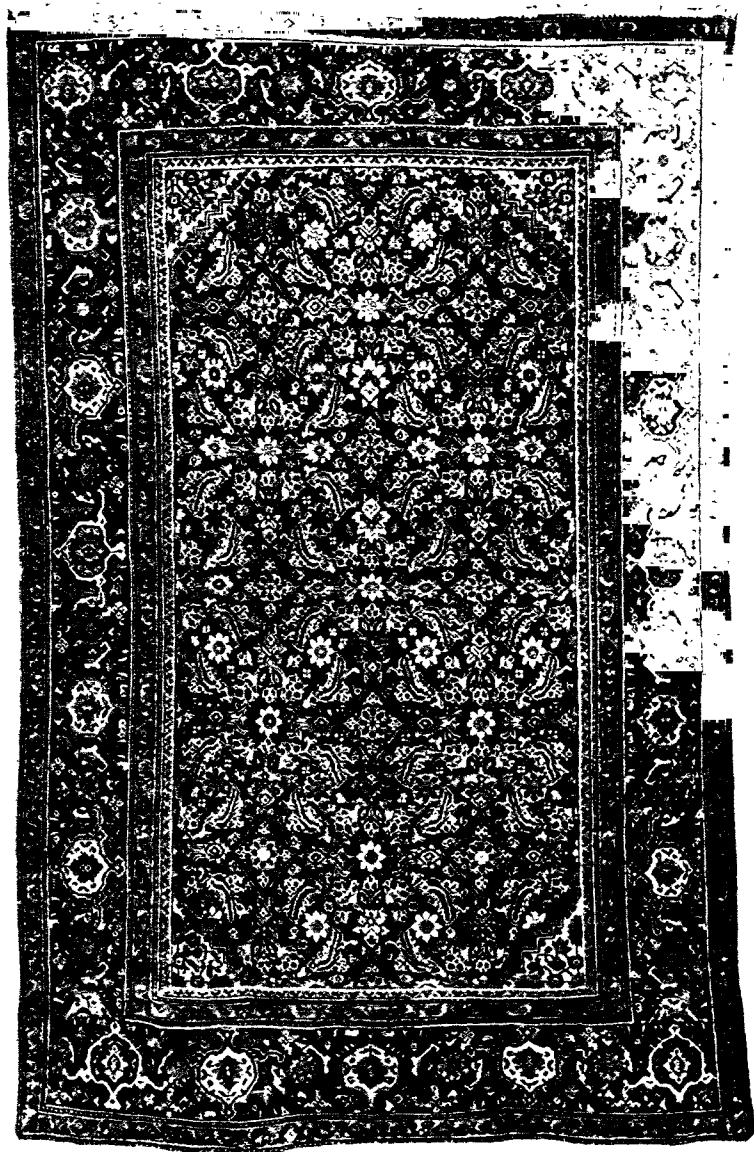
Designs

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

**Colors**        The field is usually dark blue, sometimes a soft red or ivory, which gives a rich coloring, although the modern rugs are more pronounced and less refined in tone.

**Texture**      While they are a firm and durable rug, they are more loosely woven than the Kermanshah and Senna. The modern Feraghan, made in great numbers, is of coarser texture, with longer pile than the antiques, and may be considered an excellent rug of the cheaper quality of Persians. It is well suited to living-rooms, and the coarser ones for summer homes and offices. The difference in texture is accounted for by the number of knots to the square inch. While antiques have from one hundred to one hundred and fifty, moderns have as low as thirty.

**Material and Finish**    The warp and woof are of cotton and the pile of good wool, closely cut in the old and longer in the new. The



FERAGHAN

Loaned by Mr. Joseph F. Langton, St. Paul, Minn.



## *Persian Rugs*

edge is overcast in black, and the ends, one with narrow selvage and the other with a short fringe.

They come in all sizes, from three by five to eight by twenty feet, with many carpet sizes. Size

The name Iran is often given to these rugs, but it may be applied to all Persian rugs, as Iran was the ancient name of Persia. Iran

### SARUK

Into the little village of Saruk, containing no more than one hundred and fifty houses, among the mountains of the province of Feraghan, no foreign influence has permeated, and consequently a rug of purely Persian designs of surpassing effects is made. Flowers are strewn with very realistic effect upon a field of dark blue or red; or irregular medallions, scattered over Village

Design



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

the field, with corners to match, cut off irregularly, surrounded by great richness of floral patterns, give to them a great charm. One wide and two or more narrow borders, with the usual floral effect, are often finished with a plain border like the field.

**Colors**      Rich shades in blue and red in permanent dyes predominate, with stipplings of white here and there.

**Texture and Material**      They are a very closely woven rug, having as many knots to the square inch as any rug made, even rivaling the Kirman and Senna rugs in this respect. The pile, of fine silky wool, is closely cut, and the warp and woof are of cotton.

**Finish and Size**      The edges are overcast in dark wool, and the ends are finished with narrow web at one end and short fringe at the other. In size they range from three by five to twelve by twenty feet.

## *Persian Rugs*

### HEREZ

In the mountain districts of Azer-  
bijan, east of Tabriz and southwest of  
the Caspian Sea, is the old rug district  
of Herez. While these mountain  
tribes formerly made a rug of no par-  
ticular merit, resembling in some re-  
spects the modern Hamadan rugs, they  
have more recently borrowed ideas  
from their neighbors, and the result is  
the rugs known as Gorevan, Serapi,  
and Bakshaish, all having the same  
family type, but varying in quality.  
This is one of the districts where the  
modern rug is a great improvement  
over those of earlier times. The weav-  
ers have refused to be controlled by  
outside influence, hence their rugs have  
the true Oriental feeling—they have  
something of the ruggedness of the sur-  
rounding mountains in them.

Country

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Design of  
Gorevan

The Gorevan rugs, made in great numbers, contain large, pronounced medallions, in rich blues or ivory, on open fields of light or dark red, light blue, brown, or ivory. The characteristic note is a brilliancy of coloring and a boldness of outline almost barbaric in depth and tone. They are the most pronounced rug of the whole Oriental family, and yet have much artistic feeling, due to the harmonious blending of colors and the native originality in adapting designs. The corners are often serrated, and the borders are in bold figures, to match the centers.

Serapi and  
Bakshaish

The Serapi are of finer quality, of closer texture, and shorter pile; they are softer in outline, finer in detail work, and of more refined colors than the Gorevan. The Bakshaish are still a grade finer and rarer.

Texture,  
Material, and  
Size

These rugs are firm and strong, of good wool and permanent dyes. The

## *Persian Rugs*

warp and woof are of cotton. The sides are overcast, and the ends have short fringe. They come in large sizes only, from eight to fifteen by ten to twenty-five feet; many of them are nearly square.

### HAMADAN

In the northwestern part of Irak is Hamadan, the ancient Ecbatana, the home of Esther and Mordecai. It is to-day inhabited by many Jews, and is the fourth city of commercial importance in Persia, but in a state of decay. About the city in all directions the rug-weaving industry is an important one, and the city is the market for their products. Country

With its splendid history back of it, and its reputation for artistic rugs in the past, much might be expected of its fabrics to-day; but the antiques are rare, and the modern rug a coarse one

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

of the old Herez type, the cheapest of the Persians.

**Design**      The rugs of the district have a marked individuality. The medallion center, with corners to match, filled with floral designs, on a field of light camel's hair, ivory, red, or blue, is surrounded by a border in light and dark browns, relieved by a rich floral stripe through it. The use of camel's hair in its natural color in the pile makes a rug which lends itself to color effects in browns, yellows, and light, neutral tints. This, with its beautiful, silky luster, makes it a favorite with many.

**Material and Size**      The warp and woof are of cotton, and the pile chiefly of camel's hair. These rugs come in all sizes, as small as two feet nine inches by four to six feet, and runners twenty-eight or thirty feet in length, as well as occasionally in carpet sizes. Their saddle-bags are numerous.

## *Persian Rugs*

### SULTANABAD

Sultanabad, in the mountains of Country  
Irak northwest of Ispahan and almost  
due west of Kashan, is the center of a  
rug industry, including nearly two  
hundred villages, within the radius of  
twenty-five miles. The district is a  
most picturesque one, with mountains  
and fertile plains, with a great variety  
of trees and flowers, with many little  
villages of mud huts surrounded by  
mud walls, and with nomad tribes,  
who spend their summers in the hills,  
only to return to their winter camping-  
grounds farther south.

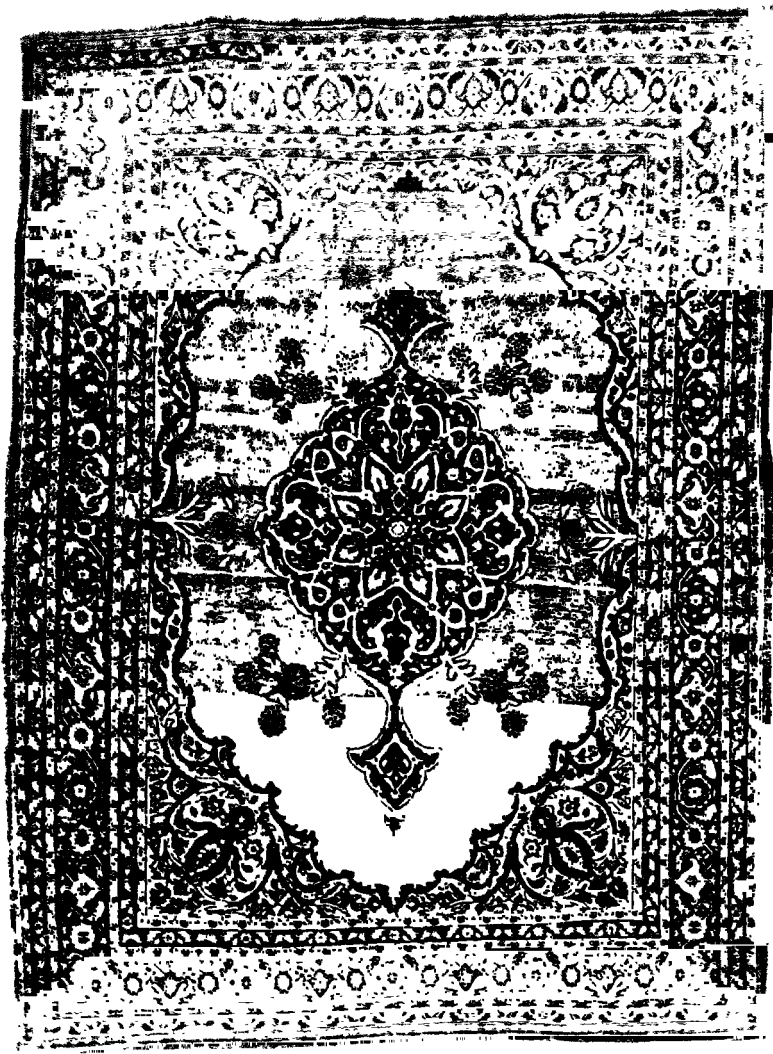
The industry here is directed en-  
tirely by European firms. Says Mr.  
Wigham: "It must be understood that  
these firms do not superintend factories  
run on European lines. Their carpets  
are made in Sultanabad and the sur-

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

rounding villages, exactly as they are anywhere else in Persia. It is the business of the firms to supply the wools and the dyes and to dictate the patterns and to receive the work when finished. Sometimes they buy up carpets that are brought in to them by villagers who have made them in their own material according to their own ideas; but generally speaking, each rug is made according to instructions and subject to a contract price. They have hundreds of designs collected from all sources, copies from ancient patterns, designs from European firms or inventions of their own, while they have specially retained Persian designers, who are paid to do nothing else but invent."

Individual  
Touch  
Necessary

It is unnecessary to say that all rugs of the Sultanabad district possess artistic qualities, although many of them do; but it is as they adhere to the designs in the old types of Persian rugs



KASHAN SILK

Loaned by Kent-Costikyan, New York City





## *Persian Rugs*

that they are most successful. It is the individual touch, so indicative of the genuine article, which is lacking, and for whose presence we contend to preserve the art spirit of the true Persian rug.

These rugs are made of a good quality of wool, with vegetable dyes, and in any size, although the large sizes are usual. The names Savalan, usually given to rugs of light color, Muskabad, and "Extra Persian" all belong to this district.

Materials

## ISPAHAN AND OTHERS

The rugs known as Ispahan are antiques made at the city of Ispahan in Shah Abbas's time in the sixteenth century and later when it was the capital of Persia. Their qualities are indicative of the ancient grandeur of the Shah's surroundings, and make

Antiques

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

them worthy to be counted among the "treasury goods" of Persia.

Typical Rug     A typical rug of the Ispahan variety may be thus described: On a more open field than many antiques, of beautiful crimson or deep wine-color, which has come to be known as Ispahan red, are large palmettes or rich floral patterns, proportionately distributed, and connected by swinging creepers with serrated leaves so arranged as to resemble an enlarged Herati pattern. The wide border, between two narrow ones, often has the palmettes between serrated leaves on an old yellow field. These rugs are rare, and are sometimes found in small as well as carpet sizes.

Holy Carpet  
of Ardebil     At Kashan, not far from Ispahan, the Holy Carpet of Ardebil, one of the most famous carpets in the world—now in the South Kensington Museum, London—was made for the

### *Persian Rugs*

mosque of Ardebil. Mr. Stebbing, in his book on "The Holy Carpet," describes the rug most minutely. It is thirty-four feet six inches in length by seventeen feet six inches in width, and well preserved as to texture and colors. The ground, of rich blue, covered with intricate floral designs and flowing creepers, has a central medallion, with corners to match, of pale yellow, from which extend little jewel-shaped figures, and from the center of the medallion sacred lamps. Of the three borders, one wide between two narrow ones, the inner has a cream ground and the outer a tawny yellow, with small floral designs and tracteries; and the wide border has a rich brown ground, with elongated and rounded figures alternating, surrounded by a profusion of floral lines. At one end it has the inscription, signature, and date of which we have before spoken.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

“Arabic”  
Rugs

The so-called “Arabic” rugs, with geometrical patterns, scrolls, and detached figures, with minute designs within, are doubtless of very early Persian weave. The ground is frequently of the Ispahan red. They come in medium sizes, and are very rare.

### III

## CAUCASIAN RUGS

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1. Daghestan. | 6. Kasak.     |
| 2. Cabistan.  | 7. Guenja.    |
| 3. Tzitzi.    | 8. Cashmere.  |
| 4. Malgaran.  | 9. Shirvan.   |
| 5. Derbend.   | 10. Karabagh. |

### III

## CAUCASIAN RUGS

THE country of the Caucasian or <sup>Country and</sup> Caucasus rugs lies between the Black <sup>People</sup> and Caspian Seas on both sides of the Caucasus Mountains, extending south to Persia and touching Turkey on the southwest. The mountain range which gives this country its name extends as an impassable barrier for seven hundred miles from the Sea of Azof to the Caspian, with but one way through—the Dariel Pass. This pass, or doorway, with its perpendicular walls four thousand feet high, surmounted by the ruins of Queen Tamara's Castle, has been made into a military road by the Russians. The whole country is most



### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

interesting and picturesque, with magnificent scenery, wonderful resources, and a people with a history dating back two thousand years. About its early history cluster many legends, among them that of Jason and his golden fleece, for Colchis strand is at the foot of the Caucasus; and Mount Kazbek is the scene of Prometheus's sufferings. Many a warrior has led his followers to the foot of the Caucasus, only to find it too great a barrier to cross, and each has left some remnant of his people, so that tribes of various nations inhabit this country to-day. Alexander went northward to Dariel Pass, as did Pompey and Justinian. The Turks conquered the native tribes, and were later expelled under the leadership of David II, a Georgian prince. The twelfth century marks their glorious age, with Queen Tamara as their idol. They succumbed to Genghis

### *Caucasian Rugs*

Khan, to the Persians, and last to Russia in 1859 after a struggle of twenty years under their chief, Shamyl. It is Russia's work now to unify this eight millions of people of many races and religions. Of her native people there are sixty or seventy different tribes, speaking different languages and dialects. They are a simple, agricultural people to-day, peaceful and prosperous, cultivating the soil, tending their flocks, and making in their homes rugs, swords, felt, and cloth from Astrakhan—all with the mark of merit upon them. Mr. Henry Norman, in his "Russia of To-day," quotes from Mr. Clinton Dent as thus describing this country and people: "If you worship the mountains for their own sake, if you like to stand face to face with Nature when she mingles the fantastic and the sublime with the sylvan and idyllic—snows, crags, mists, flowers, and for-

### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

ests in perfect harmony—where she enhances the effects of her pictures by the most startling contrasts and enlivens the foregrounds with some of the most varied and picturesque specimens of the human race—go to the Caucasus. If you wish to change not only your earth and sky, but your country, to find yourself one week among the pastoral folk who once peopled northern Asia, the next among the barbarians who have been left stranded while the rest of the world has followed on; if it attracts you to share the bivouac of the Tauli shepherds, to sit at supper with a feudal chieftain while his retainers chant the old ballads of their race by the light of birch-bark torches—go to the Caucasus.”

Art from  
Persia

Such is the Caucasus rug district today. These people, doubtless, learned the art of rug-weaving from the Persians; but in their mountain fastnesses,



DAGHESTAN

Loaned by Mannheimer Bros., St. Paul, Minn.



## *Caucasian Rugs*

surrounded by snow-capped peaks, they have developed their artistic genius in their own way, unaffected by outside influence.

In designs, their rugs have distinct geometrical patterns on a clear ground with little or no shading, but with great harmony of color. There is usually one tone, to which all colors are subordinated. They lack all the richness and warmth of color of the Persian fabrics, but possess vigor and crispness and clearness of detail, allied to the snow-capped peaks of the Caucasus Mountains as they stand out in sharp outline against the sky. Almost every conceivable geometrical form is used: the eight-pointed star of the Medes as well as the six-pointed star of the Mohammedans, the triangle, diamond, square, medallions in quaint shapes, tarantula-shaped figures, and an all-over fretwork. The “latch

Designs

### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

hook," thought to be a modification of the swastika, a great feature of all rugs of this district, borders nearly all patterns, and so takes the place of shading. On account of its almost universal use it has been called the "trade-mark" of the Caucasus rugs. The "barber-pole" stripe, too, borrowed from the Turkomans, is much used in border stripes. Another characteristic border consists of designs with saw-teeth on each side alternating with a goblet-shaped figure, said to represent the lotus in water. The countries of the Trans-Caucasus, separated from Persia only by the river Aras, show sometimes a strong Persian influence in the use of floral designs, but they are so modified as to lose the grace of the true Persian pattern. As the greater portion of these people are Moham-medans, no figures of birds or animals are used, except the little "Noah's ark

## *Caucasian Rugs*

animals" in the rugs of the southern districts.

These rugs differ from the Persian Material in that the warp and woof are both usually of wool, and they are tied with the Ghiordes knot. The wool of the pile is fine, sometimes of lamb's wool, and the dyes, with the exception of the Karabagh rugs, are good, although one must be on his guard to detect anilin dyes in any rugs of the district, for Russian control does not insure good dyes, but rather the reverse.

The Caucasian rugs are usually in small sizes. The prayer-rug is made in most varieties.

### DAGHESTAN

Daghestan, or "mountain land," as Country and  
People the name implies, is an eastern province of the Caucasus, bordering on the Caspian Sea and sloping northward to



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

the Russian steppes. The country is intersected by deep gorges, between which are table-lands, furnishing good pasturage for flocks of sheep and goats. The country is peopled by the Lesghians, a patrician race, who are divided into numerous clans, but who unite when there is a common cause, as they did under their hero, Shamyl, who led the whole Caucasian people against Russia.

### Rugs

The Daghestan weave of rugs is one of the oldest and most popular types of the Caucasus, and the rugs of to-day still are woven after the same patterns as centuries ago. They were among the first rugs brought to this country, and still hold a large place in the favor of connoisseurs. Antique Daghestans, most evenly and beautifully woven and of artistic coloring, are rare. So many of these were made for devotional purposes, and have been handed

## *Caucasian Rugs*

down from generation to generation, that one is particularly fortunate to obtain any of them. But many of the new rugs have the old designs and colors, the same vegetable dyes, fine wool, and silky texture, and are still well made.

The central ground, usually ivory, producing a surface of high lights, is covered with geometrical designs of various patterns. The all-over fret-work is, perhaps, the oldest type; but we find the medallion, the star, the diamond scattered through the field, with many little detached figures, the larger ones many times outlined with the "latch hook." The prayer-rug design with the pointed *mihrab* is very common. The border has, in general, three main stripes on a cream-colored or light-ivory ground, with rectangular designs; one often seen is the figure with reciprocal saw-teeth alter-

Designs

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

nating with a goblet-shaped figure; this doubtless represents the lotus growing in water. The borders are separated by lines of plain color or with the narrow twisted pattern or "barber-pole," and often bounded by Vandykes.

Color      A great variety of colors are used—light and dark blue, red, yellow, ivory, and green. Harmony of color is one of the great features of Daghestan rugs, and is wonderful when we consider in what bold relief the designs are worked out, and what clear, strong tones are used.

Materials,  
Texture, and  
Finish      The warp and woof are of wool, either white or gray or a mixture of the two, and the pile is of fine, soft wool, giving a surface rich and smooth, soft and silky. These rugs are thin, firmly woven, skilfully made, and hence durable. The ends have a narrow woven selvage with knotted

## *Caucasian Rugs*

fringe, and the sides are finished in colored wool.

The Daghestan rug is small, from three by five to five by eight feet, never in carpet size. Size

They have greatly increased in value in the past few years, due to the fact that no modern methods of industry have been introduced, and so the demand is much greater than the supply,

### CABISTAN

The district of Kuba, in the southeastern part of Daghestan, near the Caspian Sea, is the home of the Cabistan rugs. Country

The rugs of this district are among the best of the Daghestans, and by some are called "Daghestan of Kuba quality"; and while they resemble the Daghestan rugs in texture and design so much that they are often mistaken for them, they have some characteris- Best of  
Daghestans

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Character-  
istics

tics which warrant a separate classification. First, they are long, narrow rugs, from three and one-half to four and one-half by seven to ten feet, and claimed by some to be made for the special purpose of spreading between the graves of the relatives of the wealthy. Considered in this light, we can read in the beautiful weave, color, and varied patterns all the tenderness of the family feeling for the deceased, as each member contributed his part to the memorial. This may account for the fine quality of the Cabistan rugs. Second, a Persian influence, shown in the darker, richer coloring and in the blending of tones, producing a most artistic effect, as well as in some floral designs, distinguishes them from the Daghestan proper. Third, they are finished like the Daghestans, except that the sides are overcast or selvaged with cotton threads.

## *Caucasian Rugs*

The geometrical figures of intricate design and constantly changing pattern are hard to describe, but are unmistakably Caucasian: the elongated stars on a plain ground covered with all kinds of rectangular figures, even the little crude animal and bird designs, the center field filled with perpendicular stripes, the transverse rows of rectangular pear pattern making diagonal stripes, or the ordinary fret pattern, all are found. The prayer-rug design is never made. The "barber-pole" stripe, in width from a quarter of an inch to an inch and a half, is used to separate the borders, one of which has the large geometrical designs.

Design

The warp is of wool or cotton, the woof of cotton, and the pile of short, fine wool.

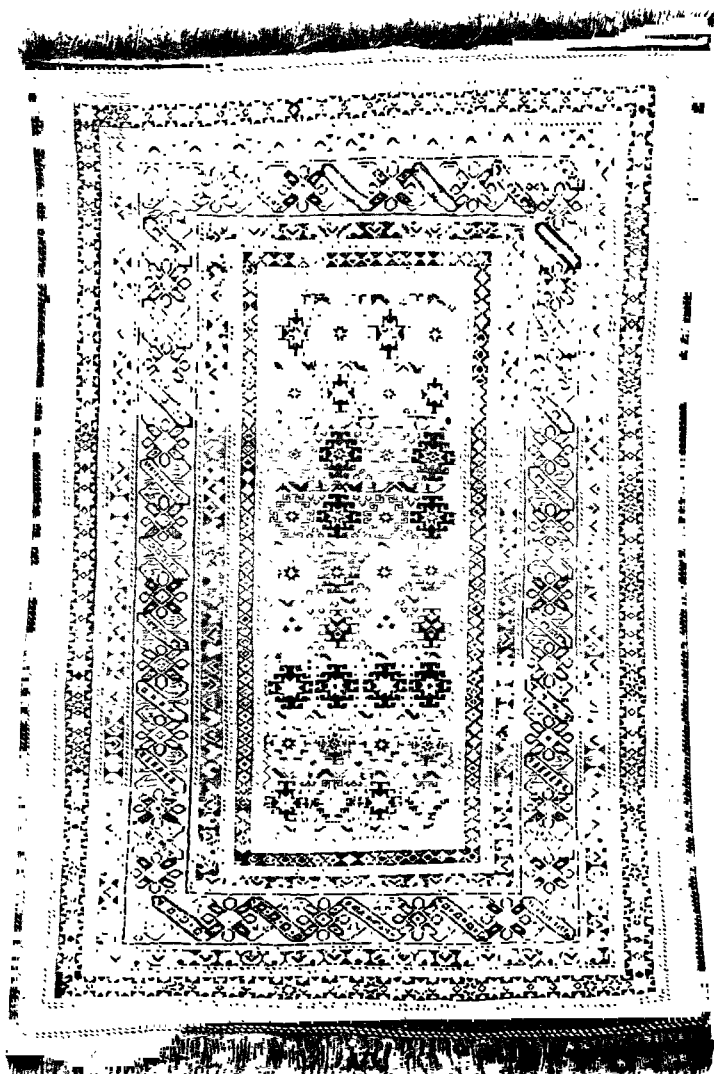
Material

The Cabistan rug is a most desirable, moderate-priced rug, of artistic worth.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

### TZITZI OR CHICHI

- Country** In the northwestern part of Daghestan is a nomadic tribe of mountaineers, called the Tchetchens, a powerful tribe, the men of whom are many of them over six feet in height. They are quite distinct in blood and language from any of the other tribes near them, and are considered by some to be of Jewish descent, a remnant of the lost tribes.
- Rugs** But whatever their origin, they make a rug resembling the Shirvan in texture, with a mixture of Caucasian and Persian designs. Sometimes the blue center is covered with diamond-shaped figures or fretwork, like the Daghestans, and again decorated with rosettes or the palm pattern, like the Persians; the borders have a combination of geometrical and floral designs.



TZITZI

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## *Caucasian Rugs*

Like most nomadic textiles, great individuality of taste is shown in the selection of patterns.

The colors are usually dark, and the texture looser than most rugs of the Daghestan district. The warp, woof, and pile are of fine wool and good dyes. The sides and ends are finished like the Daghestans.

Color and  
Materials

Two characteristics must be noticed: they are nearly square, about four by five or five by six feet; and the pattern is one which repeats itself over the entire field.

### MALGARAN

In this country of the Caucasus, as we have pointed out, there are many distinct tribes and peoples, most of whom are rug weavers. From one of these, not far to the west of the Tchetshens, comes a rug called the "Malgaran," of a type which is distinctly of the Daghestan family, but

### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

with quite an individuality of its own.

The marks by which this rug is best known are: first, they are small, from about three to four feet in length and from two to two feet six inches in width, occupying on account of size a middle place between mats and the small rugs, and as it is a size much desired, there is a great demand for them; second, they are made of a quality of wool which takes more of a luster than the ordinary Daghestan; third, the warp and woof are made of white, hard-twisted, lustrous wool, which forms the selvage at the sides, and is woven into a narrow web at the ends with a fringe tied in knots.

A typical Malgaran in design may be described as having a rich red or dark-blue field, on which are octagons very many times and very deeply indented, giving the "latch-hook" ef-

## *Caucasian Rugs*

fect. In the center of these and in other parts of the field are stars, squares, or little tree-shaped figures, in spaces having an ivory ground. The three borders, nearly of the same width, are separated by a twisted stripe. They vary in pattern, with both floral and geometrical designs in browns, blues, rich reds, and tawny yellows. The outer border is frequently divided into rhomboids of three alternating colors, and with a modification of the "latch hook" in design.

### DERBEND

The city of Derbend, or "fortified gate," situated in Daghestan, on the Caspian Sea, was for many years a military outpost of the Persians against the northern hordes. It is a city of commercial importance, and a market for other rugs than those made in and around the city.

City

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Barbaric  
Note

The makers of the Derbend rugs are of the Tartar race, and so we find a strong barbaric note in their rugs, although closely akin to the Caucasus rugs in design. They are coarser, heavier, thicker, more closely woven, and larger than the Daghestan rugs, which they resemble in patterns. They have the deep, thick pile of the Kasak, and the luster of the Mossoul—in fact, they are many times taken for a coarse Mossoul.

Design and  
Color

The elongated star, or other geometrical designs, in bold outlines, with the "latch hook" as border, on a blue, ivory, or red field, is a characteristic feature. The borders have large, geometrical patterns, and, like the Daghestan, separated by stripes of plain color. Many striking colors, in red, blue, and yellow, give to the rug a certain savage tone, unlike the Daghestans.

## *Caucasian Rugs*

The warp is of brown wool or goat's hair, and the woof and pile of good wool. The sides are usually overcast in colored wool, and the ends are either like the Daghestans, with short web and knotted fringe, or with the wide web of the Turkoman fabrics. A common size of this rug is five to six by ten feet. It is a rug of little artistic worth, and but few are found in our markets.

Material and  
Finish

Size

### KASAK

In the district of Erivan, near Lake Goktcha, and in sight of Mount Ararat, live the nomad Kasak tribes of the Caucasus. Their origin is unknown, but they are related to the Cossacks of Russia, and probably left here the remnant of an invading race. They are a brave, independent, and clever people, resembling the Turkomans, and doubtless are of the same stock. They are

Country and  
People

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

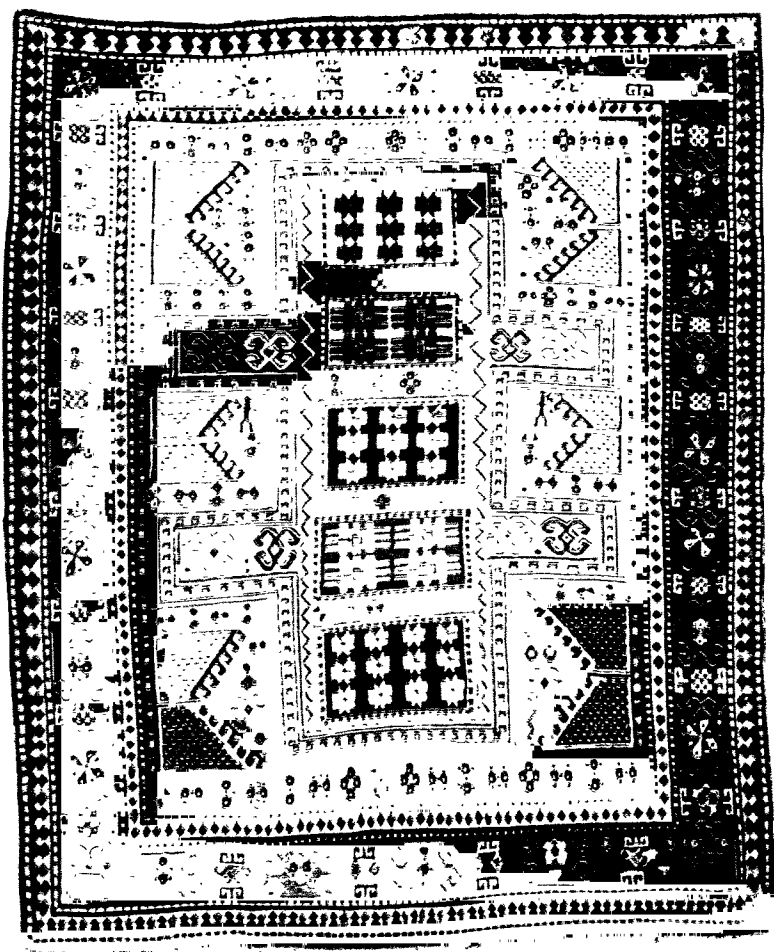
shepherds, with some brigands among them, noted for their daring horsemanship; they build no houses, but burrow in the soil, where they stay in the winter, and go to the mountains in the summer.

Character-  
istics of Rugs

Cossack, a wild, bold, restless horseman, is the original of Kasak, and the rug of the same name expresses the characteristics of their makers in a most peculiar way by showing the strength and instincts of the race. They are easily distinguished from all other rugs of the Caucasus by their heavy and firm texture, long, lustrous pile, bold figures, and brightness and richness of coloring. There is a note expressive of their free life in the dash and freedom with which the figures are placed upon the field.

Designs

Upon a ground of rich red, soft green, bright pink, or ivory are striking geometrical devices, said to rep-



# KASAK

Loaned by Mr. John B. Baird, St. Paul, Minn.





## *Caucasian Rugs*

resent a coat of arms, or octagonal shields with smaller designs of squares, circles, diamonds, stiff little animal figures, or conventionalized flowers, scattered throughout the field, and framed in bold borders of harmonious colors. The chief design of the borders is the tarantula-shaped figure with the family trade-mark, the "latch hook" in many forms, and often bordered by Vandykes.

The colors are always rich and striking and strongly massed; red, blue, green, yellow, ivory, and white are the predominating ones. Colors

The warp and woof are of wool, and the pile of long, fine, lustrous wool, which becomes very silky with age, taking on a sheen surpassed by few rugs. This may be partly due to the fact that four threads of the woof are thrown across between each row of knots, making the pile lie so that you Material and  
Texture

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

see the side of the yarn rather than the clipped ends.

Finish and  
Size

The sides are finished in a wide selvage in colored wools; and of the ends, one is sometimes finished with a fringe, but often with loose ends of the warp, and the other with a short selvage. These rugs are often square or nearly so, from four to six by six to eight feet or five by nine feet.

Desirable

The Kasak is highly prized by many lovers of rugs on account of its striking Oriental note; it is especially desirable where strong color effects are required. The antiques are rare and valuable, and the modern rugs of good values.

## GUENJA OR GENGHIS

Country and  
People

The town of Elizabethtopol, almost due east of Lake Goktcha, before Russian possession was called Ganja. It was formerly a Persian metropolis, and

## *Caucasian Rugs*

the center to which the nomad tribes in this vicinity brought the products of their looms, hence the name Guenja rug. There are various nomad tribes who range from Elizabetopol southward who are known as the "Genghis people," showing, doubtless, their Turkoman origin, and who are so related to the weavers of the Kasak rugs.

It is, perhaps, unnecessary to describe the Guenja rugs, except by saying that they may be considered a poor grade of Kasak, with coarser pile, looser texture, cruder colors; and instead of being nearly square, range in size from three by four to five by ten feet.

Rugs

## CASHMERE OR SOUMAK

The Cashmere or Soumak rugs are not from the Vale of Cashmere, in India, as the name might suggest, but are made by the nomad tribes in and about

Country and  
People

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Shemakha, the old capital of Shirvan, and are called Cashmere in this country from the resemblance of the wrong side to that of Cashmere shawls.

Distinguish-  
ing Marks

Besides this distinguishing feature of the long ends hanging loose on the wrong side, due to the fact that each time a change in color is made the yarn is pulled through and left an inch or two in length, these rugs, unlike any other except the khilims, have no pile, but are worked with a flat stitch by means of a needle. Each stitch is made diagonally, taking in two or three threads of the warp. Every alternate row the stitches face in an opposite direction, making the herring-bone pattern. The whole effect is of a fine mosaic. These rugs never take a luster, but are most attractive because of the great attention paid to detail of designs, which are on the Daghestan and Shirvan order.

## *Caucasian Rugs*

A typical rug may be described as having three or more large medallions on a field of dark blue or red, with octagonal figures within and on either side. The latter from their designs are called "Zela," and are said to represent the seasons. The central field, as well as the medallions, are strewn with geometrical figures and little "Noah's ark animals." All designs are outlined in black, and the "latch hook" is often used to its utmost. There are usually four borders: two narrow ones on an ivory ground, between which is the wide border with zigzag lines of red and blue on a black field, and the outer one, with a modification of the "latch hook."

Typical  
Pattern

These rugs have the rich coloring of the south more than the coldness of the northern fabrics — dark red and blue, green, yellow, white, and black predominate. Great harmony of color

Colors

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

and artistic effect is produced by the softening of lines through the use of the "latch hook."

**Material and Texture**      Cashmere rugs are of good wool, and are many times so closely woven that they are harsh to the touch; the degree of closeness depends on whether the woof is carried across between every one, two, or three rows of stitches. The sides are overcast in dark wool, and the ends have long, light fringe.

**Antiques and Moderns**      There are a few antiques to be had of fine texture, with colors toned down to a quiet harmony; and there are many new ones produced with the same patience, the same beauty of design, materials, and dyes, although, as in some other rugs, much undesirable work is offered to the public.

**Size**      They range in sizes from four to nine by six to twelve feet, and a few larger ones, about eight by twelve feet.

## *Caucasian Rugs*

### SHIRVAN

The home of the Shirvan rugs is the Country and  
People district south of Daghestan, separated from it by the Caucasus Mountains, and extending from the Caspian Sea to the River Kur. Baku, or "place of the winds," is the trade center of this district, an important railroad and shipping-point. It is probably more famous for its naphtha and oil wells than for anything else; but it was of old a place much revered by the fire-worshippers of Persia, and since Russia has controlled this country the Parsees of Bombay send a priest to care for the temple built over one of these springs, and to keep the light burning.

With the entrance of Russia and the Effect of  
Commerce railroad, the commercial spirit is abroad in the land; and owing to the great demand for rugs, they have fall-



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

en below the old standard in quality, texture, and dyes, but this spirit has not been so detrimental to the fabrics as in Karabagh—in fact, many modern rugs have real worth.

Designs and  
Colors

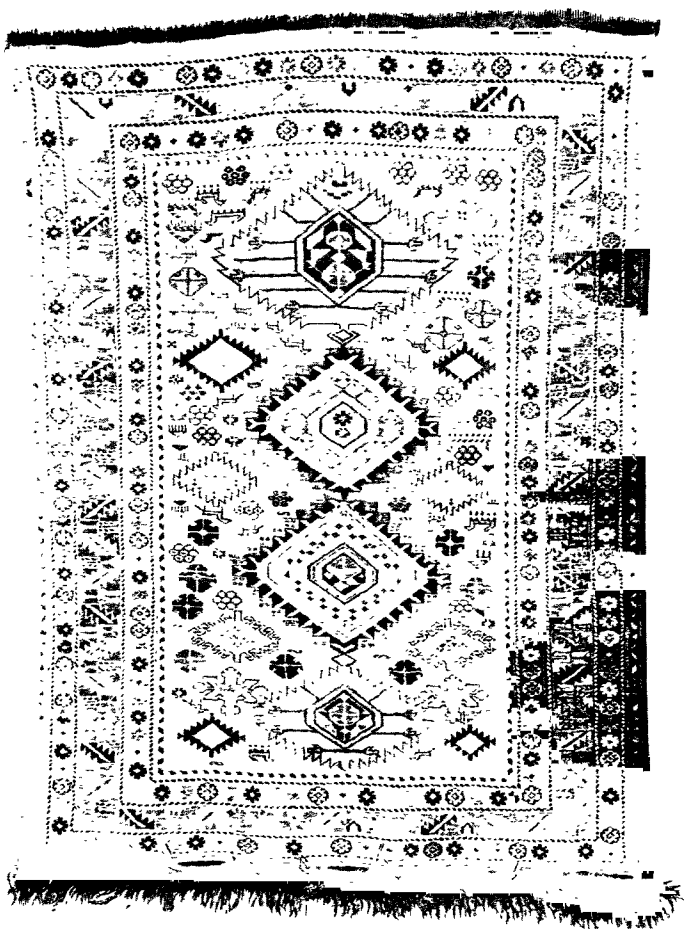
All the designs of the Daghestan rugs are found here, with often some Persian influence in the borders. The prayer pattern is much used. We find great variety and great contrasts in color, the latter being heightened by the close trimming of the pile.

Materials  
and Finish

The warp is of white or gray wool or a mixture of the two, the woof of wool or cotton, and the pile of fine wool, closely cut, which gives an unusually thin texture to the rug. The ends are finished with web and fringe, often knotted, and the sides are either overcast or selvaged.

Shirvan  
Khilim

There is a Shirvan khilim somewhat heavier and coarser than the Senna khilim, and differing from it in design.



SHIRVAN

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## *Caucasian Rugs*

This khilim is woven in stripes across the rug with bold, regular, geometrical designs in red and blue on an ivory ground enclosed in stripes of plain red, blue, and green. They are made in the khilim stitch, without pile, and of good wool. The open-work spaces are much larger than in the Senna khilim.

### KARABAGH

The province of Karabagh lies south of the Caucasus in the angle between the old historic river Arax and the Kur. It is a remarkably fertile country, with mountain streams coursing through it, and its natural resources are but partially developed. Country

When a dependency of Persia, the rugs, of which few remain, were of good workmanship; but since the influence of Russia has predominated, and the demand for rugs has been Rugs of Inferior Quality

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

greater, they have deteriorated from their former standard, and are, perhaps, the most inferior product of the loom imported.

Size and  
Color

They are usually small rugs, from three and one-half to five feet, sometimes larger, of crude, vivid colors, poor dyes, and devoid of all artistic qualities. The glaring blues, reds, and yellows, on a white field, are anything but pleasing.

Designs

While the borders adhere more closely to the Caucasus designs, the centers defy description. Many prayer-rugs are seen with figures of the hands on each side of the prayer-point.

Materials,  
Texture, and  
Finish

The wool of both warp and woof is coarse, the pile longer and heavier than the Shirvan rugs, and they are more loosely woven. The sides are overcast in colored wools and the ends left loose, or made into a short web and hemmed back.

### *Caucasian Rugs*

Karajagh runners are made just Karajagh south of the Karabagh district; and as they are marketed at Tabriz, where they compete with Persian fabrics, they are of better quality than the Karabagh rugs.



# IV

## KURDISTAN RUGS



1. Persian Kurdistan.
2. Sarakhs.
3. Turkish Kurdistan.
4. Mossoul.
5. Khilim.

## IV

### KURDISTAN RUGS

THE home of the Kurdistan rugs is Country  
not a natural or political division, but  
is wherever the Kurds live, both in  
Persia and Turkey. They may be  
found in the country extending south  
from Armenia to the plains of the  
Tigris River and east to the Luristan  
Mountains, and also a few tribes in  
Anatolia and in northern Khorasan.

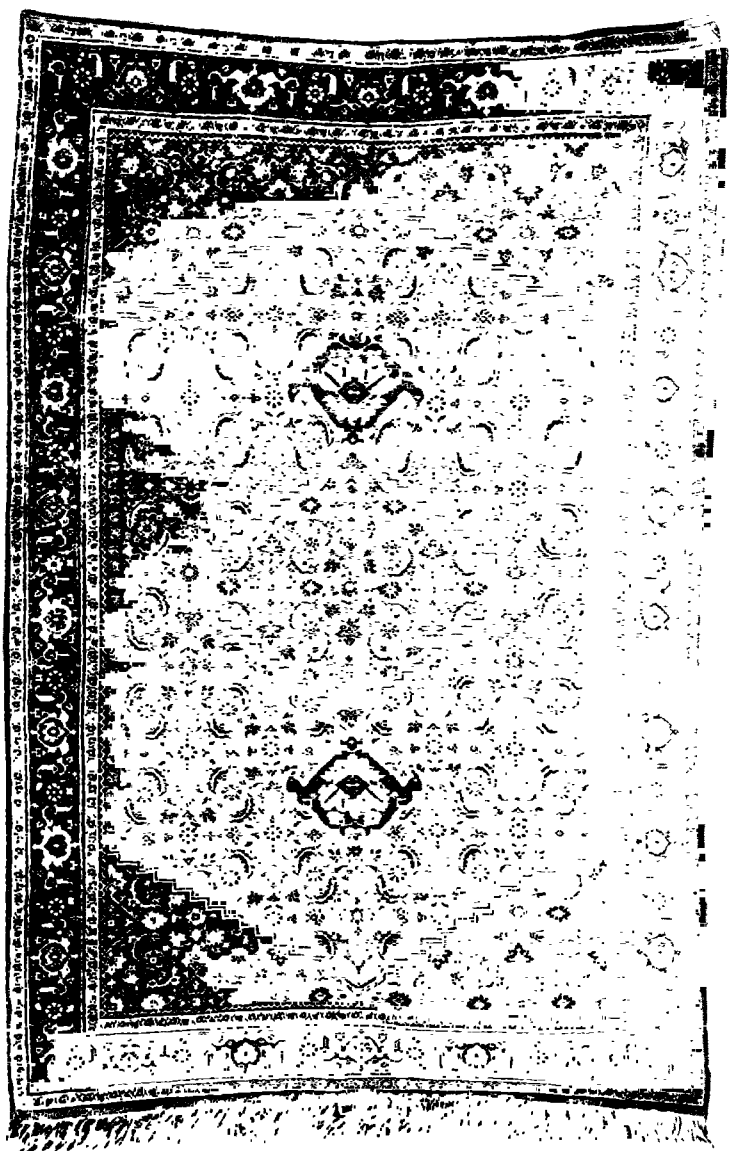
Their origin is unknown; some People  
claim that they are descendants of the  
Medes, and so Aryan, and others that  
they are of Turanian stock. This we  
know, that Saladin was a Kurd; and  
we may take him as a type of the best  
Kurd of to-day, for they are a power-  
ful race, with strong, well-shaped fea-

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

tures, with open countenances and open hearts, hospitable and frank to friends, but unscrupulous and cruel to foes. They possess strong tribal attachments. They are a people with little history, no literature, and yet a distinct race. Even those whom Shah Abbas transplanted in the sixteenth century to northern Khorasan to act as a barrier against the warlike Turkomans still retain their native martial habits, still wear their untrimmed hair and beards and the tall sheepskin bonnets. They are Mohammedans, and under Persian rule more subject to law than ever in their history, but in Turkey they are still wild and lawless.

Peculiar  
Type of Rug

It is not strange, then, that this people weave a distinct type of rug, whether we find them in rude villages or in their tents made of black goat's-hair blankets stretched upon poles. They make a heavy, closely woven rug,



PERSIAN KURDISTAN

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## *Kurdistan Rugs*

using the Ghiordes knot. Their wool is of exceedingly fine quality, and their designs are largely borrowed from Persia, with a few from the Caucasus; but they show their originality in combining them, giving their work boldness of design and richness of coloring. Their rugs are noted for shading of colors and for harmony of tones, as well as for permanence of dyes.

### PERSIAN KURDISTAN

Living as the Persian Kurds do, in one of the most fertile parts of Persia, in the western mountain districts, with fine pasture for their flocks, which are of good breed, they have for their rugs a soft lustrous wool, which they make into the heaviest carpets, whose very texture is indicative of the character of the makers—so firm and unbending.

The designs are usually Persian:

Character of  
Rugs

Designs

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

the medallion, with corners to match, on a plain, rich red or blue field, is a favorite pattern, as well as the smaller designs of the Senna, Feraghan, and Saraband rugs, for they seem to love a pattern which repeats itself throughout the field; or sometimes scattered over the whole dark field with nomadic freedom are small medallions of various sizes, with flowers and rosettes in bright colors. The borders, often narrow for the size of the rug, are in harmony with the center, but with bolder outlines than the Persian. They make many rugs with the prayer design, for which they use the soft down obtained from the winter combings of the sheep and goats. These are rare and expensive, as are those made of silk.

### Colors

In colors, rich reds and deep blues predominate, with yellow and green. These people seem to have a poetic

## *Kurdistan Rugs*

sense of color, so that their combinations produce rich, harmonious effects, and they are adepts, too, in the matter of shading and dyeing.

Their rugs are so closely woven, with each row of knots pressed down with such force, that they are many times hard when new, but become softer and of a beautiful sheen with use. Sometimes a heavy thread is thrown across with the warp for filling, giving a "body" to the carpet. The largest carpets are the heaviest made, and all of them are among the very best. Both warp and woof are of wool, sometimes in the natural color, and the pile is of strong wool, *kurk*, goat's or camel's hair, or silk.

These rugs have a narrow selvage, with a line of colored wool worked into it, which is a distinguishing feature of all Kurdish rugs. The sides are overcast in brown wool. In size they

Texture and  
Material

Finish and  
Size



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

vary from four to five by seven to eight feet, making a nearly square rug, and oblong shapes from five to twelve by nine to twenty feet.

Use        These rugs are durable and artistic, with a true Oriental spirit; they are suitable for entrance-halls, libraries, or any place where strong tones and rich, decorative effects are needed.

### SARAKHS OR LULE

Country and    At the most northwestern point of  
People        Khorasan, in the angle on two sides of which are the Turkomans of Merv, is the frontier post of Sarakhs. For many years Persia was so annoyed by repeated and unlooked-for attacks and inroads of the Turkoman tribes that Shah Abbas, in the sixteenth century, placed tribes of Kurds from the west to guard this boundary.

Rugs        Various nomad tribes of mixed ori-

## *Kurdistan Rugs*

gin, but most of them Kurds, once made magnificent carpets of fine quality of tone and durability, with a display of great originality and beauty in the combination of colors, quite wonderful from an artistic point of view, as well as in a simplicity of design, which has the true art note. In texture they resembled the Kurdistan rugs, above described, but were not so heavy. To-day their fabrics do not possess the artistic qualities of the Persian Kurds; they are not deserving of the old name of Lulé or pearl, but have deteriorated much from their former standard — where beautiful curves of the old Arabic type were used in the medallions and corner-pieces, now are straight lines, and in color there is more crudeness.

The patterns are pronounced and irregular: the bold, floral medallion, with serrated corners on a shaded field

Designs and  
Color

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

of Egyptian or Indian red, sapphire blue, tawny yellow or camel's hair, is the most characteristic design. Curious figures of animals and birds occur. The borders, harmonizing with the centers in their bold patterns, are enclosed in a plain band; the color of the field. The prayer-rug is made and also the mosque carpet with several prayer niches, but they are usually in carpet sizes.

Materials  
and Finish

These rugs are heavy, thick, and durable. The warp and woof are of heavy wool, and the pile of lustrous wool. One end is finished with a selvage, which is sometimes doubled back and woven in, and the other has fringe. The sides are overcast.

## TURKISH KURDISTAN

Kurds of  
Turkey

The Kurds of Turkey, "the free Arabs of the mountains," as they are

### *Kurdistan Rugs*

called, wander in the low countries in the winter and seek the hill pastures in the summer-time; fewer of them become stationary than of the Persian Kurds. The women weave rugs, and the business of the men is often war and plunder. They are said to be handsome, of fine physique, with strikingly brilliant and picturesque costumes, and in their tent-life have an appearance of comfort and industry.

The rugs of the northern tribes are not marketed at Tabriz, where they would compete with Persian fabrics, but at Tiflis, in the Caucasus, where they are shown side by side with the Karabagh and Guenja rugs, and the quality does not in any way compare with the rugs of the Kurds of Persia. They bear a very close resemblance to the Guenja rugs, but are heavier and more closely woven. The quality of wool is good, but coarse; and the warp

Rugs

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

and woof are in the natural color of brown wool.

Anatolian  
Kurdish Rug      There is also an Anatolian Kurdish rug, which resembles the Yuruk in bold designs, long, shaggy pile, fine wool and dyes, and the braided warp-threads for a finish. These rugs are many times very crooked, and so undesirable.

### MOSSOUL

Country and  
People      Within sight of the ruins of the ancient city of Nineveh is Mossoul, the great rug market of the Tigris Valley. Few, if any, of the Mossoul rugs are made in or immediately around the city of Mossoul, but by wandering tribes of Kurds and Bedouins, whose textile products find market at Mossoul, and who inhabit the country from Lake Van southeast to the Persian border, and many of whom wander to the warm plains of the Euphrates in the

## *Kurdistan Rugs*

winter. As when Abraham left Ur of Chaldea to go to Canaan, taking with him all his wealth in flocks of sheep and goats, so these pastoral, nomad tribes may be seen folding their oval goat's-hair tents, lading their women with their household furnishings, which consist of rugs, caldrons for cooking, and a few wooden bowls and platters, and seeking new pasture-lands for their flocks. A few of the tribes have become sedentary. The women do the weaving and, in fact, most of the work, and the men are given to plundering.

While the country is under Turkish rule, the rugs of this district have none of the characteristics of the Anatolian carpets. They follow either the floral patterns of the Persian rugs or the geometrical designs of the Caucasus; and while in color and blending of colors they resemble the Persians, they are

Designs

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

of much heavier and coarser texture. The weavers of Mossoul rugs show no originality in designs; the Saraband and Feraghan patterns are often seen, as well as various designs of the Daghastans.

Materials  
and Colors

These rugs have a thick, coarse pile, of good wool, camel's or goat's hair of rich sheen; the warp and woof are of either wool or cotton. The colors, rich, soft, and mellow, are of good dyes, often with browns and yellows predominating. Sometimes a band of camel's hair, in the natural color, encloses the rug (as a border). They are a durable rug, and often a favorite on account of the color effects in soft yellows, golden browns, greens, blues, or reds, which can be obtained by their use. The usual tone is dark.

Finish and  
Size

The edges are overcast in dark wool, and the ends selvaged, with color woven in. The usual size is about four



MOSSOUL

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## *Kurdistan Rugs*

by eight feet; there are also runners, from two to four by twenty feet, and most desirable saddle-bags.

### KURDISH KHILIM

Throughout the Kurdish districts khilims are made for use as rugs and tent-hangings, and by the horsemen as mantles to throw about them in their journeyings by day and as a bed or covering at night. They are without pile, but, like the rugs of this district, are often very artistic, having more refinement of color and less striking designs than the Shirvan khilims. They are closely woven, without the open-work spaces, either in one piece with stripes of geometrical designs across the width, or in a heavier plain piece, or in several stripes joined together, with embroidered designs, often quite elaborate. Some of these, called dji-

### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

jims, are large and of fine quality. The ends are finished with wide-woven web, like the Turkoman rugs, or sometimes have an edge woven in an attractive pattern and sewed on.

V

TURKISH RUGS

- |                    |               |
|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Ghiordes.       | 5. Yuruk.     |
| 2. Koulah.         | 6. Milas      |
| 3. Bergamo.        | 7. Kaisarish. |
| 4. Ladic.          | 8. Khilim.    |
| 9. Modern Turkish. |               |

## V

### TURKISH RUGS

THE country of the Turkish rugs is the district of Asia Minor, or, as the Greeks termed it, Anatolia, the "land of the sunrise." We know it as one of the oldest parts of the world, a historic land: the land of the Iliad and Homer; the home of a wonderful early Greek civilization, with its arts, industries, and commerce, supplanted in succession by Persian, Roman, and Turkish rule. We associate with its past the early apostolic churches, the crusaders on their way to Palestine; but to-day it is the land of Moham-  
Country  
medanism and stagnation. This district is about the size of France—a very fertile table-land, surrounded by

### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

mountain ranges, with valleys sloping to the Black Sea on the north and to the Mediterranean on the west and south. Its natural resources, under Turkish rule, are only partially developed; but the finest grade of wool for rug-making is produced in great quantities, as well as mohair from the Angora goat, silk, cotton, linen, and dye-stuffs in abundance.

People

Its people we call Turks, but there are many Greeks almost as pure in lineage as those of Greece proper, Kurds, partly sedentary but mostly nomadic shepherds, Turkomans of the mountain districts of the Taurus, Armenians, Jews, and Europeans. With the exception of the cities like Smyrna, Broussa, and Adana, where European influence is felt through its commerce, the life of the people is very primitive.

In many parts of Anatolia the rug-weaving people still carry on the in-

## *Turkish Rugs*

dustry as of old—one family raising, carding, spinning the wool, making the dyes and designs, and weaving the carpet. Among these people we find a genuine article; but merchants, bent on supplying the Western market, have, in certain districts of the western part of Asia Minor around Smyrna, which is the Oriental rug market for Turkey in Asia, abolished the old system of individual work, and are directing the work of thousands of weavers, supplying them with materials and designs and demanding a certain article. While this has been done in Persia in the province of Azerbaijan and at Sultanabad with comparatively good results, in Turkey the modern rugs are so unlike the old that it is a misnomer to call them by the same names. The commercial spirit has so permeated Asia Minor that unless something is done to encourage the individual in-

Rug-Weaving directed  
by  
Foreigners



### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

dustry of rug-making it will soon be a thing of the past, which we shall all regret, for among the antique Turkish rugs are some masterpieces. If foreign merchants would only take as patterns the early examples of this art, they would be the greatest benefactors in preserving one of the most desirable types of rugs. What Turkey needs is a Shah Abbas to encourage the best that can be done. This, indeed, is being done in a small way by the present Sultan, for he has made a collection of carpets said to be the finest in the world; and at Hereké, fifty miles from Constantinople, he has established an art school and a factory, where Greek girls study the designs of these art treasures and reproduce them as nearly as possible in color and texture. As yet this has had no influence on the products of Anatolia, but it surely will if continued.

## *Turkish Rugs*

The prayer-rug doubtless originated in Asia Minor, where we find it in perfection and with most elaborate patterns. Both floral and geometrical designs abound—the floral less lifelike than in many Persian rugs. Perhaps the most characteristic feature of the floral patterns is the various flowers—pinks, tulips, hyacinths—in profile or silhouetted on the plain field, with the stems serving as connecting lines. The geometrical patterns are less pronounced than in other varieties, and the “latch hook” less frequently used.

Designs

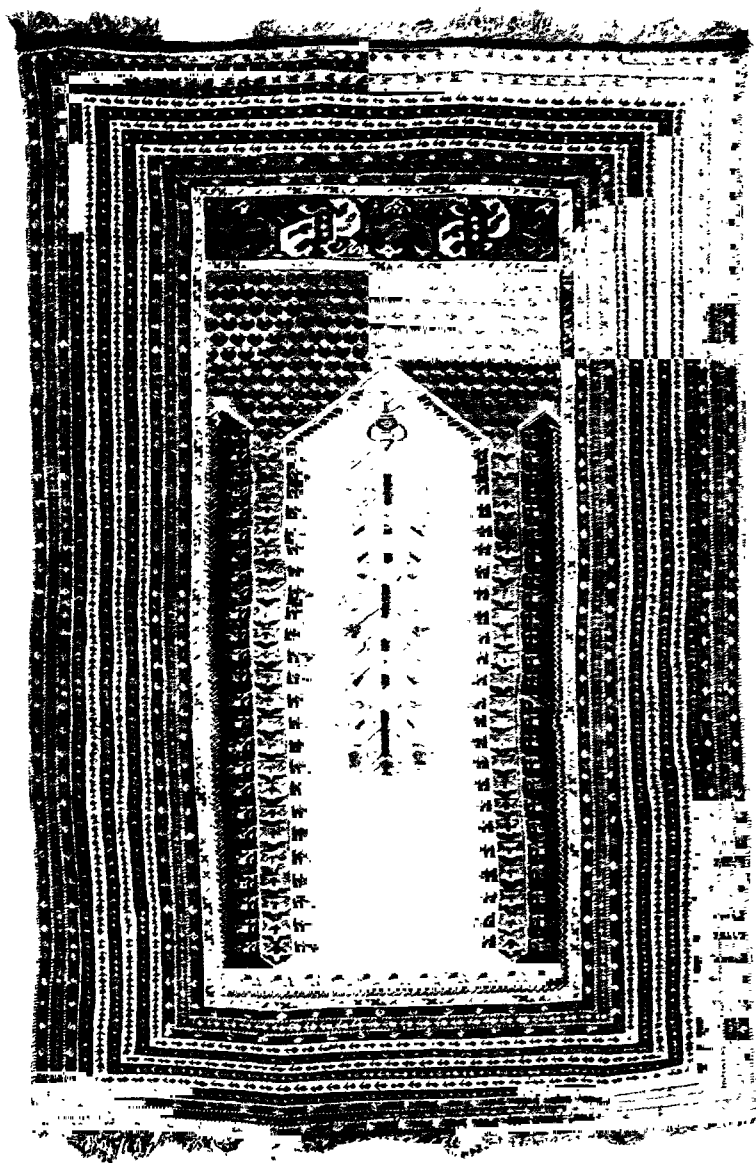
The materials for rug-making are of the best. The wool of Anatolia, much of which is raised by Turkoman tribes, is of specially fine quality, and is spun loosely, giving a fluffy appearance and producing a soft blending of colors. An attempt to introduce spinning machines has failed, and it is all done by hand in various homes. The Angora

Materials

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

goat furnishes a fine grade of mohair, which makes a rug with a beautiful sheen when new, but it soon becomes matted, and is not as durable as wool. Silk and cotton are both raised in abundance. The warp and woof of these rugs are usually of wool.

Dyes      In early days the dyes were vegetable and permanent, for Anatolia abounds in dyestuffs, but its nearness to the Occident has brought the anilin dyes into use to a large extent; however, there is an attempt being made to return to permanent dyes. Red, a favorite color in Turkey, is made from madder, which grows abundantly; and the tawny yellow, so much used, is from Persian berries. Green, a sacred color with the Mohammedans, is seldom seen except in prayer-rugs or those designed for mosques. Whatever the colors, they are usually bright and rich, but well blended.



ANTIQUE KOULAH

Loaned by W. & J. Sloane, New York City



## *Turkish Rugs*

The fluffy wool gives to the Anatolian rugs a peculiar softness to the touch. They are more loosely woven, of longer and thicker nap than the Persian rugs, and are tied with the Ghiordes knot. Texture

The antique Anatolians are all small, but to-day many carpet sizes are made. Size

### GHIORDES

A little to the northeast of Smyrna is the small city of Ghiordium, made famous in olden times by Alexander the Great in his cutting of the Ghiordium knot, but known in more recent times as the home of a rug of most exquisite colors, designs, and workmanship—a real masterpiece of the weaver's art. Country

Many of the old prayer-rugs, upon which Mohammedans have prostrated themselves in the act of devotion, Best Turkish Rug

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

have been preserved, and are too precious to-day to tread under foot, so are used chiefly as wall decorations. This is the best rug Turkey has ever produced and one which has seldom been surpassed in any country.

### Design

The prayer-rug is the design in which the people of Ghiordium excelled: the center, of a beautiful green, blue, yellow, ivory, or red, is plain, with the prayer-point or temple design supported by two pillars, from the center of which hangs a lamp. Sometimes the architectural form, which dates back to Saracenic times, is not plainly marked; and at times the pillars are omitted or replaced by a modification of the tree of life. Sometimes the prayer-niche is changed to resemble a horseshoe or crescent, perhaps made for the Stamboul sultans; and again, a floral design takes the place of the lamp. The spandrels

## *Turkish Rugs*

above the point are often filled with arabesque work or with floral conceits. The central panel sometimes has a frieze above and below. The borders, of which there are at times seven, but usually three—one wide between two narrow ones—have narrow ribbon stripes enclosing them. The designs are floral, often very realistic, or conventionalized into rosettes and palmettes, but seldom connected with the wavy line of the Persians—the flower-stalks sometimes serving the same end.

Great patience is written on the face of these rugs as well as a deep religious feeling in the great detail of design and in the exquisite handling of colors. One tone predominates, which is the same as the plain center; and the few contrasting colors are so used in the intricate designs as to produce great harmony. Although the colors are bright, they have great depth and mellowness.

Colors



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

**Materials and Texture**      The warp and woof are usually cotton, like the Persian rugs, as well as some of the white figures of the pile; sometimes the warp is of silk or fine wool, or the woof is of linen. The pile is of the finest wool, closely cut; and while it does not possess the sheen which we so often see in the antique Persians, it is very velvety to the touch. But this rug has not the texture of most Anatolians, due to the fineness of the wool.

**Finish and Size**      These rugs have often a silk selvage at the sides, and an extra silk fringe at the ends, or are finished with web and fringe. The average size is four by six feet.

**Modern Ghiordes**      The antique is a thing of the past, and almost unattainable; and the modern Ghiordes is so changed, so crude, coarse, and cheap, so without a distinct design, that a new name should be given them and the name of Ghiordes

## *Turkish Rugs*

not be dragged in the dust. They are made in carpet sizes from six by nine to seventeen by twenty feet.

### KOULAH

Southeast of Ghiordium, and due east of Smyrna, is Koulah, one of the old rug-weaving districts of Turkey. The same conditions prevail here as at Ghiordium, namely, that antiques have great worth and that the modern rugs are of inferior quality.

The antique Koulah prayer-rug differs from the Ghiordes in various ways: the center, instead of being plain, has a floral pattern extending through it; the temple design has no architectural form, and the arch is serrated. Sometimes there is a point at both ends, and the rug is then designated a hearth-rug; and in place of the three borders there are many narrow

Country

Design  
differs from  
Ghiordes

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

ribbon stripes, alternating light and dark, with small, detached floral conceits through them.

**Colors** Tawny yellow and brown are predominating colors for the center, but ivory, blue, and red are used, and the borders have blue, green, and ivory. These rugs are much to be desired where yellow or brown effects are wanted.

**Materials and Texture** The materials are always good; the warp and woof are usually of wool, and the pile of fine wool, more loosely spun and longer than the Ghiordes, and not as compactly woven, making a softer rug. They are the same size as the Ghiordes, about four by six feet.

**Modern Koulah** The ordinary, modern Koulah is a very coarse carpet, of good materials, with geometrical and floral designs of little merit. There is also a mohair Koulah, of thick, silky pile, which is one of the better grades of modern

## *Turkish Rugs*

Turkish rugs. These are both made in carpet sizes.

### BERGAMO

Bergamo, or Pergamos, one of the old Greek cities of Asia Minor, lies about forty miles northeast of Smyrna. The ruins that lie about bespeak its departed splendor, which flourished down to the time of the early Christians, when it was the home of one of the churches.

The rugs woven here of antique make are scarce and much prized on account of their beautiful coloring; but many of the modern ones are the most desirable of all the present Anatolian fabrics, although sometimes crude in color.

They usually have the medallion design, with the field well covered with geometrical patterns, and with wide floral borders—the flowers in profile.

Country

Rugs

Design,  
Color, and  
Texture

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

They are a medium-dark rug, in showy colors—red, yellow, ivory, blue, and green predominating. In texture they are thicker than either the Ghiordes or Koulah, are loosely woven, and take on a beautiful sheen.

Distinguish-  
ing Marks

Their size and finish distinguish them from other Turkish rugs. They are nearly square—from three by three to seven by eight feet. The sides are finished with a flat selvage in color, often with tassels along the sides or with rosettes at the ends of wool the colors of the pile. The warp and woof, of colored wool, are woven into a web at the ends, which often has a design worked into it or a rosette or tuft of wool woven like the pile. These are marks of a Bergamo rug, as is a tassel which is sometimes fastened to the center of the rug. All these embellishments are to keep away the "evil eye." Sometimes the fringe is braided



BERGAMO

Loaned by Mannheimer Bros., St. Paul, Minn.



## *Turkish Rugs*

into several strands, with a bead or charm fastened to it.

### LADIC

Not far to the northeast of Konieh, Country and People on the site of the ancient Laodicea, is to-day a most primitive village, in which the inhabitants live in mud huts or in tents, thrash out wheat on thrashing-floors, use the same primitive implements of industry, and dress in the same costumes as in days gone by. Paul and Barnabas traveled together over this country, which is to-day a great pasture-land for sheep and goats, rich in undeveloped resources.

The antique Ladic, either in the Rugs large prayer pattern so renowned for its glory of color, or in the small mats, from one to two and a half by two to three and a half feet, intended by the weavers for pillow covers, are very



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

rare. These rugs, made of the finest soft wool, are in beautiful, subdued but rich colors—unusual greens, deep ivory, rich reds, and light blues blend into each other in a most artistic fashion—and the designs are Turkish patterns adapted to small surfaces. They are finished in a wide colored selvage, and the ends in a web.

Modern  
Ladic

The modern Ladic or Anatolian mats are coarser, cruder in color, and of poorer dyes; but they are of good wool, and the demand for them is greater than the supply.

## MILAS

Character-  
istics

A short distance southeast of Smyrna the Milas or Melés rugs are made. They are a typical Anatolian rug, in loose weave, coarse, fluffy, long pile, in rich shades in the antiques and in the modern of brilliant colors which

## *Turkish Rugs*

soon fade to more attractive shades. The general tone of the rugs is a golden color, with red, blue, and green subordinated to it. There is no characteristic pattern, as both geometrical figures and floral designs are used. One occasionally sees a brilliantly striped rug, and, again, a simple prayer-rug, or one resembling a Bergamo in design. They often have the flowers in profile in the borders. In luster and texture they resemble the Kasak. The warp of wool makes the colored fringe, and the sides are selvaged. They are a nearly square rug, four by five feet being the usual size.

### YURUK

The word Yuruk means "wan- Country and  
derer"; and the rugs of this name are People  
made by nomad tribes resembling the  
Turkoman, who were, doubtless, left  
stranded here after an invasion of the

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

country. They live in oblong tents, made of black goat's hair, after the same fashion of nineteen hundred years ago when Paul was a tent-maker in this same country. They pass their summers in the Taurus Mountains and their winters in the fertile plains of Cilicia, near the warm Mediterranean; and although inhabiting a part of Turkey they render allegiance only to their tribal chiefs.

Resemblance  
to Kasaks

This independence of spirit is shown in their rugs as well as in their life, for they are unlike any other Anatolian weave, and resemble the Kasaks more than any other in their bold massing of color and unusual designs, as well as in the use of the "latch hook." They have the long, fluffy pile and loose weave of the Anatolians, which, with the brilliant coloring, gives them a rough, barbaric appearance. This, however, together with the depth and

## *Turkish Rugs*

richness of coloring, gives them art qualities sometimes missed by one who is looking only for fineness of texture and design.

The best of wool is used, which takes on a splendid luster. The whole rug often has a sort of metallic brilliancy, which is heightened by the fire-light. The colors are permanent, as no foreign influence has yet touched them.

Beautiful  
Luster

These rugs are finished like the Turkoman rug, with colored web or with fringe braided into rough cords. The sides are either selvaged or overcast, making a heavy, round edge. As these people are very superstitious, some irregularity of design is woven in to charm away the evil eye.

Finish

### KAISARIEH

The modern city of Kaisarieh is situated in the eastern part of Anatolia, southeast of Angora. It is a

Rug Center

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

great rug market for the surrounding country, and the center of a rug industry directed by Armenians and Greeks.

Term Ana-  
tolian

The term Anatolian, while applied to all Turkish rugs, has a more limited meaning, and has been used to designate a certain rug made near Kaisarieh and Koniah and marketed at the former place. These rugs are made in small sizes, from three by five to four by seven feet, of the best wool from the district of Angora.

Design and  
Finish

The prayer-rug follows much the same design as the old Turkish rugs with less care as to detail, with a closely woven pile of bright, crude colors. When the prayer design is not followed, the rugs are of long, loose, lustrous pile, with geometrical designs. The warp and woof are of wool, and the ends are finished with narrow web and fringe.

## *Turkish Rugs*

There is a silk Anatolian made at Kaisarieh, which we speak of in connection with silk rugs.

Silk  
Anatolian

### TURKISH KHILIM

The young Turkish and Armenian women weave for their future husbands, as a betrothal gift, a "bride's rug," or *kis khilim*. These rugs are always of good wool, of light weight, and with many open-work spaces; and as the young women wish to show their accomplishments in this art as well as their devotion to their future lords, they are often of very beautiful design. They are made either in small sizes, about four by five feet, in the prayer design, or in long, narrow rugs in pairs and sewed together, with bold designs running across the width and a border at one side. They are finished with a fringe.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Kaisarieh is a great khilim center; and here are also woven djijims, either in plain stripes with embroidered patterns, sometimes called "Bagdads," or the mosque djijim, in one piece, with designs of mosques or other figures embroidered on them.

### MODERN TURKISH CARPETS

Smyrna  
Carpets

We have already spoken of the modern Ghiordes and Koulah rugs. Within a radius of a hundred and fifty miles of Smyrna, the great rug market of Turkey, many carpets are made, known as Turkish or Smyrna carpets. The work of rug-weaving in this vicinity is largely directed by foreign merchants, at Oushak, Ghiordium, Koulah, Demirdji, Sparta, and Akhisar, where nearly every house, it is said, has one or more looms set up in the main room or in the courtyard,

## *Turkish Rugs*

and where the weavers no longer use their own designs and dyes, but are simply machines, doing the bidding of a foreign master. They are described as working to the rhythm of weird chants, from early morning until dark, for the pittance of eight or ten cents a day.

At Oushak, alone, it is estimated that from five to six thousand weavers and dyers are employed. And here the best rugs are made. They are sometimes called Kirmans and Gulistans, perhaps on account of the medalion centers. Bright reds and greens prevail, and the warp and woof are dyed the predominating color of the rug.

The distinction of rugs of modern make is one more of quality than of design. They are usually of good wool, often of permanent dyes, and of a moderate price.





## VI

# TURKOMAN RUGS

1. Bokhara or Tekké.
2. Yomut.
3. Khiva or Afghan.
4. Beluchistan.

## VI

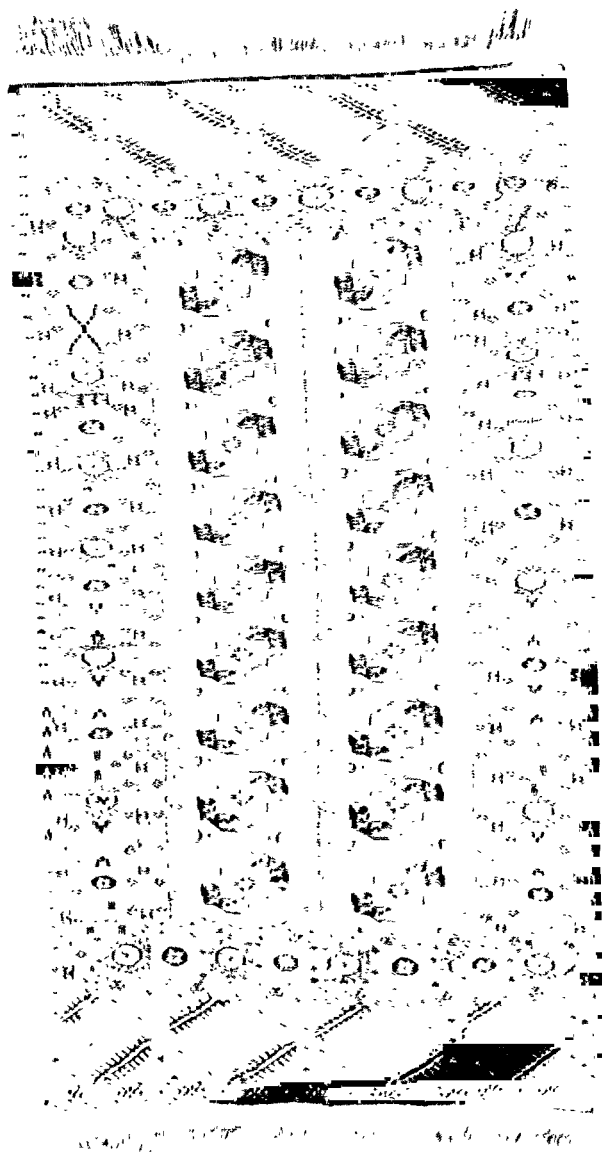
### TURKOMAN RUGS

THE rugs of West-central Asia, or Turkoman, as they are called, include not only those of the Turkoman tribes of Russian Turkestan (the Bokhara or Tekké, Khiva or Afghan, and Yomut rugs) but all made in Afghanistan except the Herat rugs, and the Beluchistan rugs. By some those made at Samarkand would be placed in this family, but they are really Chinese rugs, although the city of Samarkand is in Russian Turkestan. The rugs of Afghanistan and Beluchistan find their way to Western markets through Bokhara; and as they have some of the characteristics of the Turkoman fabrics, perhaps it is as well to place them among the Turkoman rugs.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

### BOKHARA OR TEKKÉ

Country and People	The Bokhara, or, more properly, the Tekké rugs, are made by the Tekké Turkoman tribes who inhabit the country extending southwest of Bokhara to Afghanistan and Khorasan. These tribes of nomad Turkomans, a branch of the Turkish race, until subdued by the Russians under General Skobelev in 1879, their stronghold taken, and thousands of their numbers murdered, were turbulent, restless robbers, who, fortifying themselves within their rectangular-walled forts, made raids for plunder and slaves upon all the surrounding country, especially upon Persia. But to-day, awed by Russian power, they seem content to give up the life of the border plunderer, to peaceably cultivate the soil, and tend their flocks. They still retain their primitive life in tents of felt
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# BOKHARA

Loaned by Mr. Joseph F. Langton, St. Paul, Minn.



## *Turkoman Rugs*

hung with bright carpets and with a fire in the center; and still continue to wear the same striking costumes of white cotton and colored silk, with large brown sheepskin bonnets; and still retain their cruel, untruthful, but hospitable natures.

The two cities for distributing their fabrics, which consist of silks, velvets, embroidered goods, and woolens, as well as rugs, are Bokhara and Merv. "Bokhara the Noble," as it is called, a center of learning and commerce, has one hundred thousand people, mostly Mohammedans. Its many mosques, extensive bazaars, old ruins, and people in Oriental dress make it one of the most interesting of Eastern cities. Merv, to the southeast, on the historic Oxus River, is the center of the trade routes from Bokhara to Eastern Persia and from Central Asia through Afghanistan to India.

Cities



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Rug        The Bokhara, or Tekké, rugs, woven entirely by women, are the most popular of all the rugs of the Turkoman districts, and are rightly so, for, strangely in contrast to the people who in their lives have nothing of refinement, their rugs possess unusual artistic coloring, a wonderful depth of color, like the old Dutch portraits, and a luster or bloom rarely seen.

Design    They follow a uniform pattern, with a variety in combination of colors, so that no two rugs are ever exactly alike, although very similar. The ground, always a rich, dark red, wine, or pink, with octagonal figures, separated by some geometrical device, repeated with great regularity over the entire field, makes the Bokhara rug easy of recognition. The pattern within each octagonal is divided into four parts, with the diagonal sections alike. The main border usually contains the same de-

## *Turkoman Rugs*

sign, enclosed in smaller borders of an intricate fretwork. These are frequently most beautiful.

The colors—blue, brown, green, orange, and ivory, in the designs and borders—are all subordinated to the beautiful, warm, autumn tints of the ground, which grow richer and deeper with age. This characteristic makes them of great decorative value when warmth of color is desired. The permanent vegetable dyes have been used until Russia gained control, when anilin dyes were introduced; but even yet the old dyes prevail.

The Bokhara, like all Turkoman rugs, are of looser, softer texture than most Persian rugs; they are fine, having from one hundred and forty-four to four hundred knots to the square inch. The materials are always good; the warp and woof are of wool, and the pile of soft wool, velvety to the

Colors

Texture and  
Material

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

touch, and closely clipped or sometimes of goats' hair.

Finish and  
Size

The sides are overcast in wool the color of the rug, and the ends finished in a wide web of the same color, sometimes striped in red and blue and again with a dainty pattern in color. Occasionally there is a twisted rope at the ends, showing that the rug was designed as a hanging. In size they range from two by three to eight by eleven feet, and sometimes as large as twelve by eighteen feet.

Prayer-rug

The prayer-rug, in rich mahogany, of Rembrandt shades, has at one end the usual pointed device. The center field, covered with little tree-shaped patterns, is divided into four sections by a large cross, with geometrical designs within. The widest border has larger tree-forms enclosed in a modification of the swastika. These rugs are nearly square, about four by five

## *Turkoman Rugs*

feet, and finished like the larger rugs. When the prayer-point is omitted, these square rugs, with the "Kchatch-li," or cross, are designed as saddle-covers.

Saddle-bags are made in great numbers, with the octagonal design of the family on a rich color. They have long fringe on three sides. Saddle-bag

There is also a khilim made at Merv which resembles the Kurdish embroidered khilim. Khilim

Antique Bokharas are of great value, running as high as a thousand dollars. Some, which have had long use as tent portières, are of wonderful, deep tones, and before the firelight seem to possess a radiance all their own. Antiques

## YOMUT

West of the Bokhara rug district, bordering on the Caspian Sea and north of Khorasan, are nomad tribes of Turkoman  
Tribe

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Turkomans who are the weavers of the Yomut rug. These tribes differ but little from those who make the Bokhara rugs, but are not friendly to them.

Resembles  
Bokhara

They make a rug resembling the Bokhara in color, texture, and end finish, but unlike in design, although at times the octagon is used. They have borrowed color from the Tekké tribes at the east and designs from the people beyond the Caspian Sea, so that the Yomut rug is a composite. The field is usually a darker, duller red than the Bokhara, more of a brownish red, and one which does not light up or possess the sheen of the Bokhara proper. The diamond, with "latch hook" ornamentation in dark blues and browns, is a frequent design; and when the octagon occurs it is more elongated than in the Tekké rugs. The borders have geometrical figures, with the

## *Turkoman Rugs*

“ latch hook ” on an ivory ground ; and the narrow, twisted, or “ barber-pole ” stripe, which seems to have originated with the Turkomans, is used to separate the sections.

In texture these rugs are not so fine <sup>Texture and</sup> and soft or velvety as the Bokhara, but <sup>Finish</sup> the wool and dyes are good. The finish is the same as the Bokhara at the ends, wide web and fringe, but the sides have a double selvage in two colors arranged in checks, and a stripe of wool is sometimes woven into the colored web at the ends.

They are not as artistic a rug as the true Bokhara, but are of refined colors and durable. The sizes are from five by eight to eight by eleven feet.

### KHIVA OR AFGHAN

The country of the Khiva or Afghan <sup>Country</sup> rugs is that part of Afghanistan bordering on Russian Turkestan.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Compared  
with Bokhara

These rugs are recognized at once as belonging to the Turkoman family. They resemble the Bokhara in design, but are a much heavier, larger rug, of coarser weave, larger pattern, longer pile, deeper coloring and more blending of color, and with a barbaric note not found in the Tekké rugs. It is a wonderful thing that these uncultivated peoples can produce such harmonious blending of striking colors as is seen in their fabrics. Age gives to these rugs a beautiful sheen, a silky effect, and a depth and richness of color unsurpassed.

Colors

The colors in the patterns are blue, green, brown, yellow, and ivory, on a dark, almost blood-red or maroon field, which take on a rich glow in the fire-light.

Materials  
and Size

The materials are of the best wool, and the finish the same as the Bokhara rugs. They are in sizes from five by

## *Turkoman Rugs*

eight to eight by eleven feet, and rarely one is found as large as nine by twelve feet. They make saddle-bags, too.

The Khiva rug is adapted to libraries, entrance-halls, living-rooms, and wherever warm, rich tones are desired.

Besides the Khiva and the Herat Other Rugs rugs, which we have classified as Persian, the wild tribes to the southeast make a rug allied to the Persian in design, but with the texture of the Khiva. These people, living in the wild mountain districts of Afghanistan, many of them brigands and outlaws, with an instinct for independence, put much of their natures into their woven fabrics, and so give us rugs of barbaric splendor in color and of heavy texture, which are most attractive.



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

### BELUCHISTAN

Country and  
People

The country of the Beluchistan rugs, including a large district, partly under Persian rule and partly under the protection of India, extends from Kirman to India and from Afghanistan to the sea. It is an undeveloped country, with great diversity of surface and vegetation — with jungles of acacia, mimosa, and tamarisk in the south, with plains and mountains farther north, where many date-palms grow and where abundant pasturage is found for flocks of goats and the dark-wooled sheep. This country, which has been the highway from Persia to India for ages, is inhabited by a pastoral people, whose villages are simply groups of huts made of palm-leaves and mud or of sun-dried bricks, and by numerous nomad tribes of primitive habits.

## *Turkoman Rugs*

The rugs of this district, sometimes wrongly called "Blue Bokhara," from their resemblance in design to Bokhara rugs and from the bluish sheen which many of them take on, have some very distinguishing characteristics. They are always small, from two and one-half by three and one-half to five by seven feet, with occasionally one seven by eleven feet. They have rich, subdued tones of rich red, camels' hair, or deep blue, which in some lights is almost a black, for the field, upon which are geometrical figures of various colors—maroon, brown, soft blue, ivory, red, or green, and over all this a wonderful sheen, like the blue of distant hills. Occasionally the designs are in stiff, floral patterns, or in stripes, or in a checked, mosaic pattern. The *mih-rab* is usually square in the prayer-rug, and the "latch hook" and Vandykes are used in the borders with geometrical figures.

Character-  
istics of Rugs

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Material and  
Texture

Both warp and woof of these rugs are of wool, and the pile of finest wool or goats' hair, which gives a soft, silky texture. The natural wool is dark, and takes on an unusual richness when dyed. No other rugs have this peculiar blue cast, and so they are much desired. They make a most attractive hearth-rug, for the firelight seems to heighten this feature. They are loosely woven, making a pliable rug. The wide, striped selvage at the ends, like the Tekké rugs, is found here, often worked in exquisite patterns, and the sides are either selvaged or overcast.

## VII

### INDIA RUGS



## VII

### INDIA RUGS

INDIA, stretching from the Hima- Country  
laya Mountains southward into the  
Indian Ocean, is a remarkable coun-  
try both in its natural resources and  
in its development. Bounded on the  
north by the highest range of moun-  
tains in the world, and separated from  
other countries by the Indus and  
Bramaputra Rivers, here, apart from  
other peoples, the early Aryans, after  
making subject a native race, devel-  
oped on the banks of their great rivers  
a most splendid civilization. There is  
something very fascinating about them,  
their history, literature, religion, and  
arts; and with a knowledge of these we  
can better appreciate the present con-  
ditions.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Three  
Periods

We may divide their history into three periods, according to Hindu, Mohammedan, or English supremacy. The Hindu, with his subtle intellect; the Mohammedan, with his chief thought his religion, to which at one time he made subservient all the arts; the Englishman, with his commercialism, has each had his share in shaping the destinies of this people. It is with the last two periods that carpet-weaving is connected.

Homes  
Simply Fur-  
nished

This land of diverse races and peoples, differing so widely in their mode of life that they have little in common, yet agree in furnishing their homes most simply. For it has been said "that in India the great art in furniture is to do without it." Mr. Birdwood writes: "You may pass through a whole palace and the only furniture in it will be rugs and pillows, and, of course, the cooking pots and pans, and

## *India Rugs*

gold and silver vessels for eating and drinking, and wardrobes and caskets and graven images of the gods. But you are simply entranced by the perfect proportions of the rooms, the polish of the ivory-white walls, the gay fresco round the dado, and the beautiful shapes of the niches in the walls, and of the windows, and by the richness and vigor of the carved work of the doors and the projecting beams and pillars of the veranda." This people seem filled with a true art spirit, and everything they touch shows a magic hand.

There is an old Hindu saying "that the first, the best, and the most perfect of instruments is the human hand"; and when we read of the beautifully carved temples, the inlaid work, the gold and silver plate, the enamels, the jewelry, the pottery, the fabrics—especially shawls, muslins, and rugs, which

Handicrafts  
of India



## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

have been brought to such perfection in far-off India—we can but believe that they have been and are a race of cunning craftsmen. Mr. W. S. Lilly, in his *India and Its Problems*, writes: “It may be truly said that the artistic spirit displayed in the architecture of their temples permeates the life of the people. From the earliest times they have been famous through the world for their skill in the production of delicate woven fabrics, in the blending of colors, in the working of metals and precious stones; everything that comes from the hands of their artisans down to the cheapest toy or earthen vessel is a work of art.” And Sir George Birdwood, who is an authority on this subject, says in his *Industrial Arts of India*: “Every house in India is likewise a nursery of the beautiful. . . . There is a universally diffused popular appreciation of technical skill and taste

## *India Rugs*

in workmanship which must necessarily have had its effect in promoting the unrivaled excellence of the historic art handicrafts of India."

Little is known of Indian art until after the Mohammedan invasion about 1000 A. D. As the invaders used rugs to kneel upon in their religious devotions and to ornament their mosques, they doubtless brought them into India. It is possible that cotton carpets were indigenous to India. But the great era of carpet-weaving was in the sixteenth century and continued down to the middle of the nineteenth. The great Mogul, Akbar, who was contemporary with Queen Elizabeth in England, brought carpet weavers from Persia to work at the looms in the royal palace at Lahore, and under his direction, as under Shah Abbas's in Persia, the art side of the industry was developed. For it is said

Rugs  
Brought by  
Moslems

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

that he had a personal supervision of all work done in the palace, and that he was not unfamiliar with all processes. This made possible a high grade of work. And so from Lahore the industry spread throughout India.

Antiques      It is thought by some that the productions of these looms are still in existence, and that they resemble very closely the old Ispahan carpets. In the museum at Jeypore are carpets of very early date, said to be manufactured at Lahore, and to resemble the sixteenth-century Persian work.

Effect of Village System on Carpet-Weaving      The village system of grouping into one guild all workers in one industry helped to preserve the handicrafts of India, and so the art of carpet-weaving. It has been said: "The Code of Manu has secured in the village system of India a permanent endowment of the class of hereditary artisans and art workmen, who of themselves consti-

## *India Rugs*

tute a vast population; and the mere touch of their fingers, trained for three thousand years to the same manipulation, is sufficient to transform whatever foreign work is placed for imitation in their hands into something 'rich and strange' and characteristically Indian." And so, although the designs of carpets introduced by Akbar were Persian and the fabrics from the Mogul's palace really Persian fabrics, yet, as the years went by, the true Hindu feeling crept in and a true Indian carpet was the result. Especially in the south, in Tanjore, the floral designs entirely disappeared and geometrical patterns, resembling the Turkoman, but with the Hindu spirit, took their place. This is but an illustration of what has been said of the Hindu as a race: "That they adapt and assimilate easily and express as Indian whatever comes within their touch."

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Love of  
Color

The Hindu is a true Oriental in his love of color, but in carpets his choice is in rich colors, not glaring and gaudy, with tints well blended, making a fabric admirably adapted to rest the eye when out of the glare of the sun.

Dyes

Dyeing was a special gift in India carried on by women, while the weaving is done by men and boys. Indigo, from which the finest blue is obtained, is indigenous and produced in great quantities, and her beautiful lac dyes formerly gave employment to thousands before the introduction of anilin dyes.

Materials

Wool can not be raised in all parts of India, as the climate is not favorable. The mountain districts in the north and the plains of Tibet furnish the best wool, as well as "pushmina" or shawl wool, the down growing next the skin and under the hair of the goats of Tibet. Punjab and the Northwest

## *India Rugs*

Province furnish some wool, but India imports much. Cotton, which is so largely used in making the blue and white striped rugs for native use and as the warp and woof of the woollen carpets, grows in great abundance, and silk and hemp are of native production.

The characteristics of the old fabrics were the natural beauty of the dyes, the taste and skill exercised in the harmonious arrangement of colors, the simplicity of decorative details, and the avoiding of extreme contrasts by outlining in black the details of design.

Character-  
istics of  
Antiques

The designs of these carpets varied with the districts and the peculiar influences surrounding. In the north, floral designs were used in imitation of the Persian, with more boldness and dash, with more plain surface and less delicate tracery, and with more symmetry and balance. In the south, geo-

Designs Vary

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

metrical designs were in general use to the exclusion of the floral.

Seats of Old  
Industry

The principal seats of the old industry were Lahore, Multan, Mirzapoor, Allahabad, Benares, Hyderabad, Warangal, Masulipatam, Malabar, and Tanjore.

Carpets  
Made in  
Royal  
Palaces

Following the example of the Emperor at Lahore in placing the manufacture of rugs in the royal palace, other princes brought the art of carpet-making to a high standard.

Tanjore  
Rugs

At Tanjore, one of the centers of the Hindu religion, the rugs are said to have been made with designs characteristically Indian, to be especially fitted for the durbar display or for the halls and tents of native princes. With medallions of enormous size, sometimes measuring eight feet across, filled with unique designs in gorgeous colors—greens, blues, crimsons, and yellows, so harmoniously arranged as to give the

## *India Rugs*

effect of a rich fabric without crudeness—with a border from two to six feet wide, a rug from this district possessed a beauty of its own unlike any other made.

The silk carpets of Tanjore, Warangal, Masulipatam, and Benares are said to have rivaled in texture and coloring the finest Persian. Sometimes the pile was left long, so that the wave of color gave the effect of the plumage of a bird. It is the loss of native fabrics like these which is so much regretted.

In 1851 an exhibition of Indian textiles was held in London, and carpets gathered from all parts of India were shown. At that time the industry was practised in its original purity throughout India; and it is of these carpets that Mr. Robinson and Mr. Birdwood speak in their descriptions of the various varieties. But since that time the

Exhibition in  
London in  
1851



### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

native work has deteriorated, due to various causes: the demand in England for cheaper rugs, the introduction of carpet-weaving in Government jails, thereby making competition so strong that the native weaver is crowded out, and the introduction of foreign designs and anilin dyes. So that a true Indian carpet is seldom met with except in the cotton rugs which are universally used throughout India. But private firms, English and American, are directing carpet-making, and while their products are not an expression of the Hindu spirit, yet they have merit in that they are genuine in dyes and material, that they can be ordered of any size, pattern, or coloring, and that the workmanship is good. When all these qualities are combined in one rug, as they many times are, the result is a fabric far more artistic than any machine-made rug, though not equal to many Persian rugs,

## *India Rugs*

for the individual expression is lacking.

The best jail-made carpets are manufactured at Agra; and while the authorities aim to use good dyes and old designs, the subtle and art qualities of an Oriental rug are not produced by this kind of workmen. In many districts the native industry of rug-weaving has disappeared in the face of this rival—the Government jail. These carpets are prohibited by law from the American market.

The desertion of the native patterns for those of English importation has been a misfortune to the carpet industry. And in all industries where European designs have been followed the results have been unsatisfactory, as, for example, the cashmere shawls, which, when made after French patterns, lost their “peculiar loveliness.” We agree with Sir Richard Temple

Foreign  
Designs a  
Detriment

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

in his India in 1880, when he says:  
“We ought to recognize the indigenous arts of India when produced by hereditary artists with designs originating in nature and worked out with tact and skill.”

### MODERN INDIA RUGS

Modern Rug  
not a Native  
Product

The modern India rugs brought to this country are made by firms which control the industry in India. While made by native boys and men, often under the immediate direction of native princes, or other men, they can hardly be said to be a really native product, for the designs, materials, and dyes are furnished them and they simply do the mechanical work, but with such deftness and skill that the result is a good article. Let me quote from Eliza R. Scidmore's *Winter India*; speaking of the work at Amritsar, where some of the best results are obtained, she says:

## *India Rugs*

“At the large carpet factory ninety-seven looms were strung with cotton warp, and little Kashmiri boys sitting elbow to elbow before them tied in the woolen threads, cut them with miniature scythes, and pressed down the stitches with wooden combs. A spectacled old Kashmiri, seated behind each curtain of warp threads, read off the directions for the pattern from pages of Kashmiri cipher, all understanding and following this ancient, conventional cipher by inherited association more easily than any of the clear, mechanical directions devised and used by the managers of jail carpet-works. Four small boys, with one old man to read the pattern to them, will make a fine, close, velvet-pile carpet, measuring eleven by thirteen feet, in two months and a half—a carpet worth twenty-five dollars gold at Amritsar. The design is chosen, the

### *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

materials allotted, and the contract let to the reader, who pays each boy three or four rupees a month. Conventional old Turkish and Persian designs are followed. They are first drawn in colors, traced on scaled paper, graded to the number of warp threads, and the pattern written in Kashmir cipher. The small boys work mechanically, tying on two, four, or twenty stitches, as the reader calls to them, paying little heed to what is growing under their fingers, whether scroll, leaf, or stripe. 'Two pink, three green, one red,' chant the boys in monotones after the reader. The reader watches the pattern grow, and, detecting a false stitch, raps the offender with the stick he holds for the purpose. The carpets are valued both for the fineness of the stitches and the quality of the wool. . . . Each loom was a *genre* picture and a color study, with the spectacled Kashmiri in

## *India Rugs*

sober turban and jacket on one side and on the other the row of long-lashed boys in brilliant garments elbowing and shoving one another and tittering together, quite as all children behave in the presence of school visitors."

This is probably a typical picture of rug-making as it exists to-day in India. There is no opportunity for spontaneity or originality of design, no chance for the subtle Hindu thought or feeling to creep in.

Many of the firms are copying old Persian rugs, especially the Herati and Guli henna patterns, and the medal-lion center on a plain ground with corners to match. The palm design and the stiff cypress-tree are used, as well as scrolls, and in as great a variety as can be imagined. If you wish a design of your own and are willing to wait and to pay for it, you can have your heart's desire.

Designs

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

**Colors**      The modern rugs have departed from the old Hindu thought of rich tones only, and all colors and shades are used to suit the fancy of the maker.

**Dyes**        Reliable firms see to it that the dyes are vegetable and permanent and that the wool is of good quality; so the way to get a good article is to deal with the right people.

**Texture**     The texture of Indian rugs varies: some are very fine, having as many as four hundred stitches to the square inch, and others much coarser. They are closely woven and are the heaviest rug made.

**Material**    Like most Persian rugs, they have a cotton warp and woof. The ends are finished with a fringe and the sides are overcast with the prevailing color of the rug. They are made in all sizes, from mats to the largest carpets.

**Districts**    There are four districts where rugs are made in large quantities: Punjab,

## *India Rugs*

Northwest Province, Cashmere, and Madras Presidency; of these the Punjab produces the best carpets. The name is given by the firm importing or manufacturing. Amritsar, Candahar, Bijapur, Punjab, Lahore, Mirzapoor, Cawnpore, Ardahan, are a few of the varieties.

Mr. Ruskin, speaking of the English influence on carpet-making in India, and the same is partly true of American influence, says: "Modern commercialism has laid its poisonous trade upon this useful industry since the days when I was a young man, and to-day it is almost ruined as an art." If a nation can not survive the loss of its religion, can this industry survive the loss of its ideals?

Effect of  
Commercial-  
ism





## VIII

## CHINESE RUGS

1. Peking.
2. Tientsin.
3. Ning-hsai.
4. Eastern Turkestan.
5. Samarkand.

## VIII

### CHINESE RUGS

EVER since Marco Polo's time, China, Country  
"the long-lived empire," has been more  
and more of interest to the outside  
world. This country, whose glories lie  
mostly in the past, is the home of the  
oldest, continuing nation, dating back  
in its history to 2852 B. C. The empire,  
the largest in the world, includes China  
Proper, Mongolia, Tibet, and Eastern  
Turkestan.

Her people, mostly engaged in man- People  
ual labor, are skilled in many handi-  
crafts. The manufacture of silk, por-  
celain, and lacquered ware originated  
with them, and their *cloissonné*, pot-  
tery, carved ivory, embroidery, and

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

rugs are the admiration of the world. Wisdom is said to lodge in the hand of the Chinese, and we believe it when we see the delicate work of their hands. Every art object is the work of one artist in design and execution.

Homes      As a people, they have no old or great buildings, no monuments except the Great Wall of China. The homes of the poor and middle classes, with their earth floors covered with matting, have no comforts; and the houses of the rich, with marble tiles or glazed brick floors sometimes spread with rugs of exquisite coloring and workmanship, are neither beautiful in design nor elegant, although they possess rich, carved ornaments and many art treasures.

Rugs      Rugs have long been made in China, where they are masters of the art, for there is the record of a beautiful white silk Chinese carpet which covered the

## *Chinese Rugs*

shrine of the Kaaba at Mecca long before Mohammed's time, and to-day some few of surpassing excellence from the Chinese palaces reach this country.

Their carpets are unique and unusual, without the grotesque figures which occur in many of their art fabrics. They are original in design, and less influenced by modern ideas than many rugs. The trellis, or fretwork, is a common background on which are arranged disks, circles, octagons, figures of dragons, bats, butterflies, and other animals, as well as the lotus and a few other floral patterns. The Greek border, supposed to be derived from the old emblem of happiness, the swastika, and the cloud band, which is thought to be the snake emblem of India, are much used.

Designs

In addition to originality of designs, the colors, especially in the old carpets, are soft, pleasing, and well

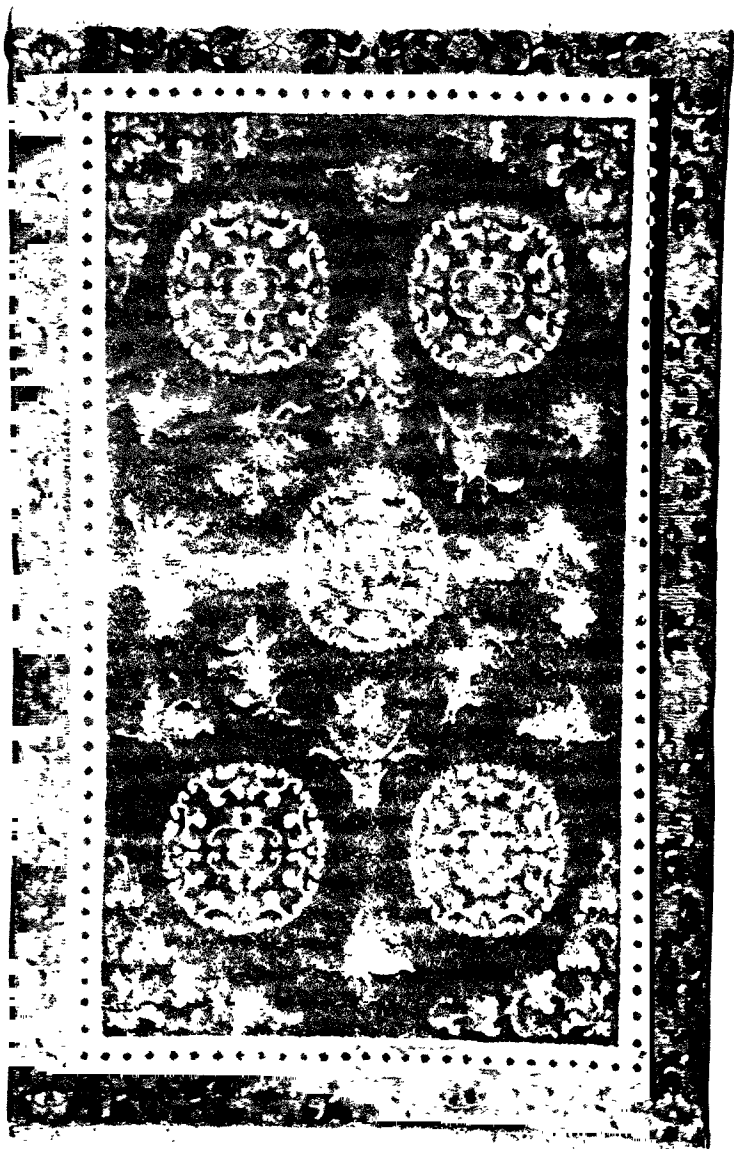
Colors

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

balanced. Golden and tawny yellows, fawn shades, old blue and a turquoise, and red are favorite colors. As the Emperor puts on robes of blue when he worships the heavens in reference to the sky, yellow for the earth, red for the sun, and white for the moon, so the use of these colors in their rugs are likewise suggestive.

**Symbolism**     Mr. Wells Williams, in *The Middle Kingdom*, says that "a rug often tells a story," and he believes that their use of animal figures is symbolical. "The bat represents happiness, and when five are used the five happinesses — riches, longevity, sound body, love of virtue, and peaceful end." The dragon, which is their national emblem, symbolizes sovereignty; the tortoise, immortality; and the deer, honor and success.

**Materials**     The finest rugs, soft in texture and lustrous, are of Tibetan wool or silk,



PEKING

Loaned by A. A. Vantine & Co., New York City





## *Chinese Rugs*

and others are made of coarser wool from Mongolia or from camel's hair. Formerly only permanent colors were known, but anilin dyes are fast taking their place.

The rug districts are Peking, Tientsin, Ning-hsai, in the northern part of China Proper, in Tibet and Mongolia, in the cities—Khotan, Yarkand, and Kashgar—in Eastern Turkestan, and in Samarkand of Russian Turkestan. The Peking, Tientsin, and Samarkand are the only varieties known in this country.

Districts

### PEKING

In the Chinese city of Peking, which is the outermost of the four concentric cities—including the Chinese, the Tartar, the Yellow or Imperial, and the Purple Forbidden City—is manufactured one of the best grades of Chinese rugs.

Chinese City

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Antique  
Rugs

The antique rugs of this make possess many art qualities. They are soft in texture, of good, lustrous wool, silk, or camel's hair, and have the usual characteristic Chinese designs — the conventional fret pattern, the bats and butterflies of longevity, dragons surrounded by cloud bands, disks, and lotus blossoms. One, in a private collection in New York city, is of glorious, golden, sunset color, with its fretwork pattern of the field imperceptible only when the shades of golden-dyed wool are in certain lights, and the Greek border encircling it in clear outline. A similar one has exquisite fawn shades. Such wonderful art treasures are rare, and are only to be found in the Celestial palaces. One sometimes sees a rug of tawny yellow on which are scattered disks with dragons and cloud bands; or on a deep blue or Chinese red is a fretwork in

Designs

## *Chinese Rugs*

shades of tan; or scattered over a plain field are bats or other animals. The borders usually have the Greek meander with disks or lotus blossoms. These rugs come in small squares, made for pillows, in medium and carpet sizes, and sometimes circular.

The modern carpets retain the old designs, but combine them with scrolls, flowers, and leaves, which rob them of their Chinese spirit; and here, too, the use of anilin dyes is slowly and artfully taking the place of the old permanent ones.

Modern  
Rugs

## TIENTSIN

The rugs known as Tientsin, made at the port of Peking, are of coarse wool or camel's hair, of long, thick nap, close, firm weave, with none of the artistic coloring or luster of the antique carpets of Peking. But few colors—two shades of blue, black, brown, and

Compared  
with Peking  
Rugs

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

white—have been used until very recent times.

Design

On a white field, Chinese geometrical and conventional patterns, with various modifications of the swastika and a border of the Greek fret, have been the usual scheme of design; but the weavers are exchanging the old patterns for large roses in reds, greens, and the whole range of colors in the anilin dyes; and with the deterioration in designs and colors the texture has also changed for the worse. So that the latest rug has none of the sturdy and genuine qualities of earlier days, for which the corrupting influence of foreign trade is responsible.

### NING-HSAI

Ning-hsai, on the upper Whang-Ho, near to the border of Mongolia, has been famous for centuries for its wool carpets. On their rude vertical looms

## *Chinese Rugs*

the men and women, with no pattern before them, tie in the colored wools of their own dyeing, making a carpet with the usual Chinese designs. As this is the home of the old Chinese nation, doubtless carpet-weaving in China originated here. They make them for use as pillows, saddle-covers, and to spread on the floors of tents. Many are sold to the Mongolians, and some find their way to Tibet.

## CHINESE TURKESTAN

The country of Chinese Turkestan, Country  
surrounded as it is on the north, west,  
and south by high mountains, has received little influence in its primitive civilization except from China. Marco Polo tells how the people in this country lived by trade and handicrafts, among which were the polishing of jade and the weaving of rugs.

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

And to-day, in the vicinity of Khotan, Yarkand, and Kashgar, rugs are made whose prevailing note is Chinese, though some of the floral patterns may have found their way from Persia.

Khotan      Bayard Taylor, in his *Travels*, speaks of the beautiful Khotan carpets which were spread on divans in the "royal rest" rooms near Yarkand, and of the fine trappings of their horses.

Yarkand      At Yarkand, which is the chief city and the home of the military officials, rugs of a pronounced Chinese type are woven. The designs are disks, medallions, and stiff tree forms, the latter of which sometimes cover the entire surface. In color and texture they have something of the barbaric note of the rugs of eastern Afghanistan.

Kashgar      And at Kashgar, which is the center of a great caravan trade, and one of the richest markets of central Asia, a car-

## *Chinese Rugs*

pet of coarse wool with glossy surface and bright colors is used by the natives in their tents and for saddle-covers and saddle-bags.

## SAMARKAND

More than a hundred miles east of Bokhara and still in Russian territory, on a branch of the Oxus River, is Samarkand, once famed for its learning, and the center of college life in Asia. It contains the tomb of Tamerlane and the ruins of many grand buildings. Even in its decay its public square is said to rival that of St. Mark's at Venice. The surrounding country is very fertile, and noted for its beauty, fine fruits, and delightful climate.

Tamerlane brought artists from captured Persian cities to his capital; and so the art of rug-weaving was conveyed to these people by experts, and

City

Persian

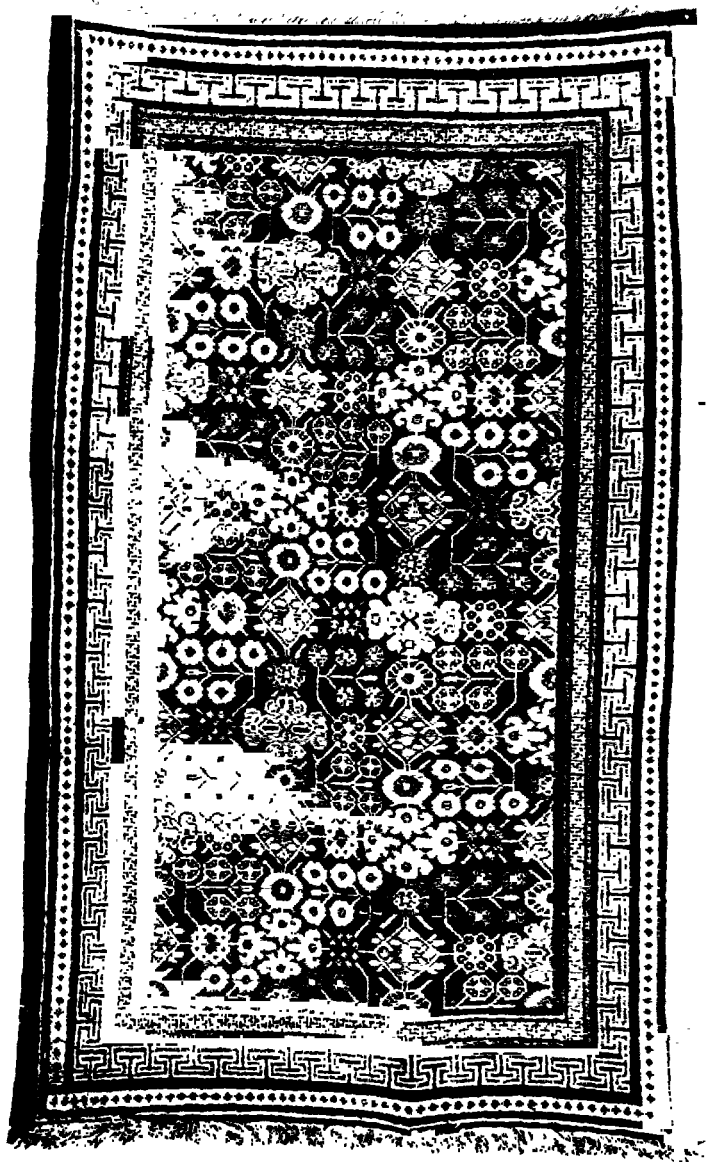


## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

to-day, although hundreds of miles from Persia, we see traces of her influence, although the Chinese characteristics predominate.

**Rugs**        The Samarkand rugs are of fine, loose texture, almost like silk with their rich, heavy nap. Antiques are rare and of exceptionally refined colors, and the modern fabrics are very attractive.

**Design**      The field is usually blue or red, but sometimes golden brown, soft fawn, or a mellow gray, with the Chinese fret or wavy lines covering it, and with from one to five disks in soft yellow, red, or blue, symmetrically scattered through it. Within each disk is often the figure of a dragon surrounded by cloud bands. Or sometimes the center is divided into squares with conventional designs within. In the modern rugs there is often a fretwork bordering the field within the border proper. The borders consist of coordinate



SAMARKAND

Loaned by Mannheimer Bros., St. Paul, Minn.



## *Chinese Rugs*

stripes, sometimes the outer one a little wider than the others, and finished with a band of solid color. The inner border usually has the Greek meander, the outer one with floral patterns connected with the wavy lines of the Persian borders, and the middle one has figures corresponding to the center.

The warp is coarse cotton or silk, the woof cotton or wool, and, like the Kasaks, is thrown across a number of times between each row of knots. The pile is of loosely spun wool or of silk and wool. The sides are selvaged, sometimes in two colors like the Yomut rugs, and the ends are finished like the Turkoman rugs, with web and fringe.

Materials  
and Finish

The sizes are from three by six to nine by fifteen feet. The modern rugs have deteriorated somewhat from the high standards of early times.

Size



## IX

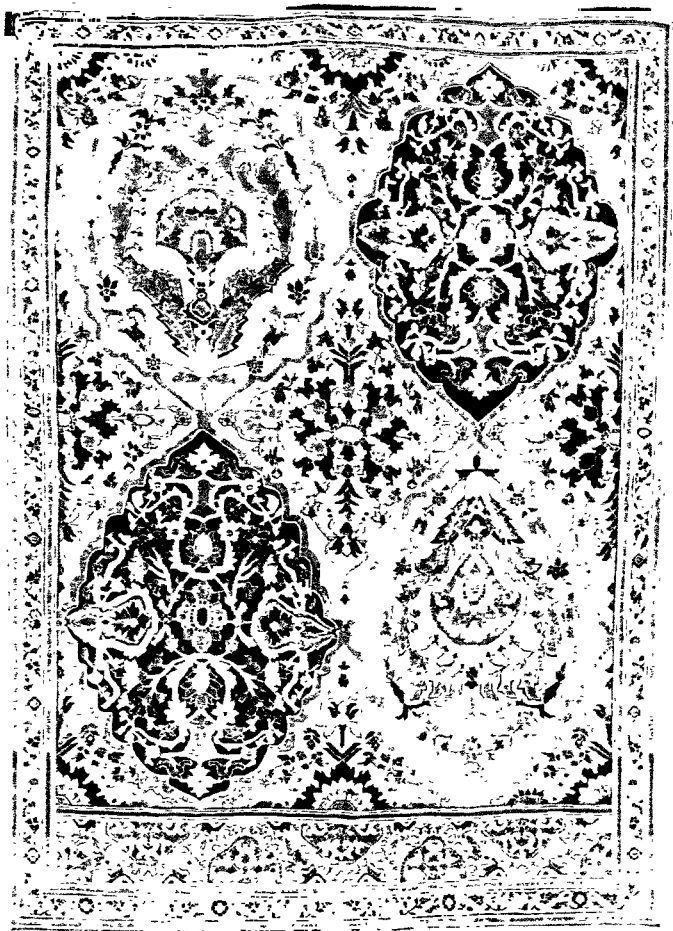
### SILK RUGS

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

walls; and the temples of the dervishes are said to be rich in these art treasures. An antique Persian "Hunting Carpet," a Turkish prayer-rug with its *mihrab* and hanging-lamp looking almost like stained glass, an Indian floral carpet with its long pile, said to resemble the brilliant plumage of their native birds, or a Chinese rug of imperial yellow, are any of them rare, and are to this art what the works of the old masters are to the art of painting.

Persian

Kashan, between Teheran and Ispahan, was in Shah Abbas's time, as it is to-day, the center of the silk-rug industry in Persia. The antiques, with their gorgeous colors, fine texture, and metallic luster—real works of art—seem suited to rooms of Louis XVI style, or in keeping with brilliant decorations, as those of St. Mark's at Venice. The old "Hunting Carpets," with elaborate detail work, showing in their designs



PERSIAN SILK

Loaned by Kent-Costikyan, New York City





## *Chinese Rugs*

forests with hunters and dogs pursuing animals of the chase, rugs with exquisite floral designs with birds, those with a medallion on a plain center, as well as the prayer pattern, are all found among the old silk carpets. The colors—red, rose shades, turquoise and the rare old blue, deep wine, ivory, and green—in silk have less warmth and softness than the fine wool carpets, but often possess iridescent luster not seen in any other rugs.

The modern reproductions of the old in design and color are of much better quality and workmanship than the rugs of Anatolia. They are seldom made as large or as elaborate in design as many of the antiques; the usual size is four by six feet. The warp and woof are often of silk, and they are finished with narrow web and fringe.

Modern  
Persian

The antique Anatolian, or Turkish silk rug, follows the designs of the

Turkish

## *How to Know Oriental Rugs*

Ghiordes wool rug, having the temple design with its lamp, showing that it was intended for sacred use. The intricacy of design in the borders and in the spandrels above the point is heightened by the fine material.

Modern      The modern rugs are of two grades: the better one, made in the Sultan's factory at Hereké, rivals the modern Persians in quality and follows them in design, as well as reproduces the antique Turkish patterns; while those made at Kaisarieh are purely Turkish in design and less desirable in coloring, dyes, and workmanship.

India and  
Chinese      The India and Chinese silk rugs are extinct. The India rugs resembled the Persian in design, but with much Hindu feeling, and the Chinese differed not in design from the wool rugs of Peking.

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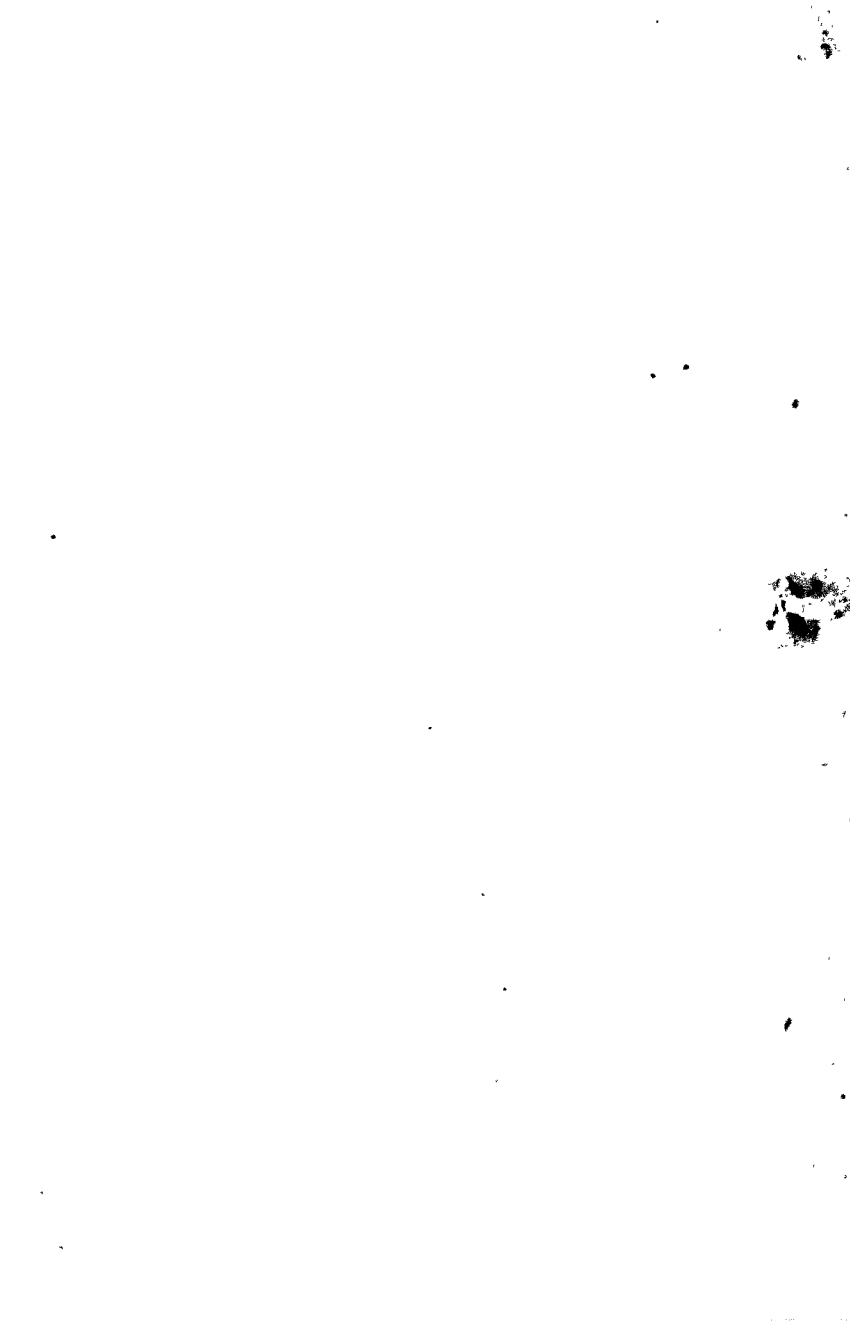
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THE END



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